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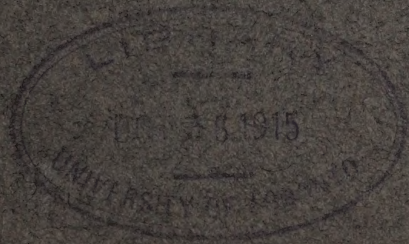
A CRITICISM *of* SOME
ATTEMPTS TO RATIONALIZE
TRAGEDY

By

LUCIUS WALTER ELDER

A THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Pennsylvania in Partial Fulfilment
of the Requirements for the Degree
of Doctor of Philosophy



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PREFACE.

It is now ten years since the problem of this study took form in my mind. It had its origin in a chance remark which, as I remember it at this distance, was to the effect that in ancient tragedy there was a clear vision of a solution for the difficulties confronting man; but, in modern tragedy there was no such possibility present to the mind of the reflective poet. Ruskin expresses a similar judgment, quoted hereafter.

My first attack on the problem was to verify the assertion by an inductive survey of tragic drama, both ancient and modern. The main result of this reading was to give the problem a different form; and the issue then became: Are not the difficulties of a solution of the tragic outlook to be explained as correlates of the theory of knowledge? The essay may therefore be regarded as an attempt to justify putting the problem in that way. The task resolved itself into a search through the literature of Western Europe for an idea: namely, What relation have men found between the causes of tragic disaster and the failure of knowledge to give valid results? Thus, the study, though historical in method, makes no claim to have exhausted the resources; but claims, rather, to be critical of results assumed to be defined with historical accuracy.

The aim of the thesis is to show that in the better known conceptions of tragedy the failure of the poets and aesthetic philosophers to give us a completely rational theory may be explained by reference to the more inclusive theory of knowledge forming the background of the tragic conception. The thesis shows in detail that, when the responsibility for the tragic situation is put on one or the other of the essential factors, the theory about the fact of tragedy is still unsatisfactory. It is further shown that aesthetic speculation, in attempting to remedy the matter, increases the gravity of the conception. The expo-

sition of this point is developed through three typical moments in the history of thought. These are:

1. The theory that the mischances of fortune may be overcome by retiring into the self based on the theory of knowledge held by Stoics, Epicureans, and Skeptics, respectively.

2. The theory that passion, as a source of tragedy, may be avoided by subjecting the emotions to the discipline of reason. A basis for this theory is found in the philosophy of Spinoza and Leibniz.

3. The theory that tragic guilt is inherent in the nature of the finite individual. The explanation of this theory rests on the philosophy of Hegel, Solger, Schelling, and others.

In each of these cases it is pointed out that there is an unknowable element in the universe which passes over into the corresponding conception of tragedy as an element not amenable to human will; and that, therefore, it is something which cannot be completely rationalized. From a consideration of these matters it seems consistent to suppose that the worlds of tragedy and comedy are metaphysically different; and the attempt to view tragedy as a higher kind of comedy is likewise open to criticism.

I accept this opportunity to express a sense of indebtedness to former teachers. To those in the University of Michigan I owe, at least in large part, the very habits of my thought. How unworthily I have profited, they only will be able to judge; and my vagaries of thought, or inaccuracies of scholarship, must not be laid to their account. As little are my teachers in the University of Pennsylvania responsible for my shortcomings. To them I am indebted for the generous help, the kindly criticism, the patience and forbearance, which made the completion of this essay possible.

LUCIUS W. ELDER.

Kingfisher College, January 1, 1915.

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I.

Statement of the Problem.

The more important, or better known, definitions and conceptions of tragedy¹ are, in this essay, to be considered as so many attempts to rationalize one or another of the elements commonly supposed to constitute the tragic situation. We may accept provisionally as the tragic situation that ethical moment in the life of the finite human individual wherein he finds such an obstacle to the complete fruition of his purpose, that, when he would have chosen what seemed to him the better way, he was, nevertheless, obliged for some reason to accept the worse². The result, to be tragic to the individual, must be of such a kind as to force the belief that human endeavor is futile.

Whatever may be the motive that leads to the experience of the insuperable obstacle: namely, conduct motivated by passion, by disregard of recognized moral principles, or by any conscious aspiration; if, in the result, there is suffering and defeat too great to be borne; contradiction in ethical principles too fundamental to be resolved; limitation to human aspirations too definite to be overcome:—then we have a tragic situation. In other words, it may be said that the factors commonly assumed to be essential to the tragic situation are three:

1. the tragic guilt;
2. the reversal of fortune;
3. the inevitable conditions leading to the catastrophe.

These factors, though here given in their traditional phraseology, have received a varying connotation. But in general the first factor, the tragic guilt,³ has been traced to an origin in human nature. The tragic guilt may be, for example, a wilful disregard for recognized moral prin-

ciples; an irresistible impulse or predisposition to commit lawless acts; an error or frailty of judgment.⁴ In the Nineteenth Century tragic guilt has been extended to cover the necessary limitation of spiritual interest by reason of which the individual gives his allegiance to unworthy ends, or to one interest exclusively; for in the mere fact that the human being is finite there is a limitation from which no one is free. In any event, whatever constitutes the tragic guilt is a source of suffering and of conflict between the actual and the ideal; between the transitory and the permanent; between false pretensions to power and its actual possession; between pretended immunity from the necessity of destiny and actual subjection to it. Herein, as Schelling pointed out, everyone is guilty; though one may be without true, or ethical, guilt.⁵

The second factor, the reversal of fortune, is the change in the status of the individual due to his conflict with the higher powers of the universe.⁶ But the reversal itself may be hypostatized as Fortune, Fate, Chance, or Destiny; and when so conceived is the immediate or efficient cause of the tragic guilt as defined above, and the cause of the defeat and suffering. The third factor, the inevitableness of the conditions leading to the catastrophe,⁷ is referred for its origin to the necessary relations of the individual to the world as a whole; or to the relations of the immediate world of actuality to the moral and spiritual world.

The inevitableness of the catastrophe, as Lessing demanded,⁸ may be a strict causal development from the fault or tragic guilt, which, because it is a violation of the immutable Justice of the world, must entail some punishment or reparation; even though to preserve the moral harmony of the universe, the punishment may be out of all proportion to the individual's responsibility for his act. That Justice, because it can take no cognizance of the conditions of the act, can make no exemptions. The inevitable conditions may range in character from the whole complex of circumstances surrounding every common act

consciously determined on to those compelled by causes of which we are ignorant and unconscious. They may range from the results of retributive justice, and legal punishment for torts and overt acts against society, to the sacrifices demanded by the impersonal values of patriotism and religion; or, even to the resignation of the individual will demanded by the pursuit of ideals which are impossible of realization. Finally the inevitable conditions may lie in the recognition of the futility of striving against an irrational world.

Hence it has happened at one time or another that one, or all, of these factors have been regarded as demands made on the life of individuals to which it is impossible to conform and yet live. Each one of them has been subjected to a two-fold analysis in which:

1. One of the factors has been regarded frankly as an irrational demand, incapable of explanation and unknowable;

2. One of them at least has been found necessary, on the basis of some inclusive view of the world as a whole, to explain the relations of the individual to the universe: particularly that relation defined above as the tragic situation.

In this respect, then, the conceptions of tragedy may be regarded as attempts to rationalize those facts of existence which in themselves offer no satisfactory explanation. For if tragic guilt, reversal of fortune, or inevitable conditions, can be shown to be necessary characteristics of the universe, they may to that degree be called rational and knowable. In other words, to adopt an Aristotelian distinction, whatever follows by logical analysis from general principles, to the extent that it is a deduction, may be regarded as more knowable in itself.

Criticism of the attempts to rationalize one or all of these factors will include some consideration of the following points:

- I. The theoretical or philosophical basis on which the critical attitude depends. Here there falls to be con-

sidered the relation of philosophy, and especially the problem of knowledge, to:

1. Reflective thought about art, especially dramatic art;

2. Art itself, especially tragic art.

II. Three things concerning the various conceptions of tragedy:

1. The concept of tragedy is usually found to be consistent with some larger, more inclusive view of the universe, in which that concept answers to some specific demand for a theory of suffering and defeat.

2. The criticism will attempt to show that however satisfactorily tragedy may be conceived or defined from the point of view of some specific theory about the universe, nevertheless, the acceptance of the definition entails also the acceptance of something in that definition contrary to our desire or experience. Unless we can accept in its essential outlines the point of view of the poet or aesthetic philosopher, we shall not be able to accept his attempt to make some useful concept out of the "necessary limitation of spiritual interest," "arbitrary revolution of Fortune's wheel," or "the highest expression of personality in suffering." Here are ideas at which we revolt; for to admit that we can understand and accept them may require too complete a reorganization of all our experience; and, consequently, they are ideas which cannot be accepted as true descriptions of the world as a whole. We may detect this failure to rationalize completely the whole conception of tragedy in various ways, but especially in two, as follows:

- a. The tragic poet fails to convince us that the catastrophe was necessary; that the disaster needed to have been so overwhelming. The inability of the poet to find a solution of the difficulty is not always obscurity of his spiritual vision; but often subjection to the popular or reflective views of his age. Hence, what the poet portrays for us is, as a matter of in-

terpreting the world, referable for its explanation to the peculiar conditions of the thought of his time.

b. The failure in the same way of the aesthetic philosopher is due to the fact that he raises the factors of the tragic situation to the status of necessary elements of the universe; and in turn refers them for explanation to the principles which, he admits, are for us unknowable because universal. He may, as in the case of Schopenhauer or Bahnsen, adopt a mere conceit or affectation as a metaphysical principle and attempt on that basis to explain the notion of tragedy.'

3. Concerning the tragic, it must be shown, thirdly, that there not only is, but also must be, an irrational element present in the conception, in the sense that there is a factor in the universe unknowable to the finite human intellect. This point likewise involves two others:

a. Inasmuch as theories about art are supposed to have some necessary relation to the philosophy from which they arise, or to the prevalent view of the world at the time to which they are pertinent, it follows that the irrational element in the concepts under consideration may be referred to that philosophy for its ground or sufficient reason.

b. In particular, the irrational element will be regarded as the necessary correlate, in the conception of tragedy, of an unknowable or irrational factor in the corresponding theory of knowledge.

III. The criticism will also attempt to give some evidence from the poets and the field of reflective thought to illustrate the foregoing points. Some attempt will be made to show that idealistic theory about tragedy has been especially prone to make of it something distasteful which in reality it may not be.

IV. Finally, there will be some consideration of the attempt made to prove tragedy essentially identical with

comedy. The impossibility of their identity is evident if we regard two opposing theories of knowledge as dividing the labor of explaining the universe.

II.

The Relations of Reflective Thought to Art.

The thesis rests in the first instance on a correlation of philosophy with reflective thought about art, and with art itself. Philosophy in general, it may be presumed, is identical with reflective thought, and especially with what Aristotle called the whole of disinterested knowledge. For the purposes of the present study, however, philosophy will generally be deemed equivalent to the theory of knowledge and the inquiry into the significance of the facts discovered by the special departments of science or experience.¹⁰

Some of the possible relations of truth and beauty are especially significant. Beauty in literature, or art in general, is known to us in the first instance through concrete expression.¹¹ Its immediate cognition is perceptual. From this point of view beauty is largely a matter of construction and sentiment. The fact that beauty can be expressed in terms of perceptual knowledge may be otherwise stated: Beauty has a variable content, not only in point of subject matter, but also in point of the interpretation given by the artist to his material. But the beauty of a thing may lie not only in its content, but also in the correspondence of that content to our views of the universe. That is beautiful to us which we find to be in accord with our beliefs. Unlike custom or law, beauty is quite largely a matter of the individual. A work of art is an individual, personal, or subjective interpretation of the universe for the purpose of making clear on the perceptual level of knowledge what the ideal of life is. To deduce from any specified work of art just what the artist conceives the ideal of life to be is no easy task;

for it is largely a matter of interpretation and patching together fragmentary expressions.

We do not desire to make of the artist a misguided philosopher; nor of the philosopher an unconscious poet; nor is it to be presumed that art is exhausted by a purely intellectualistic interpretation. But it should not be forgotten that philosophy may, in its technical fashion, be an expression of the artistic ideals of the period in which it arises.¹² On the other hand, if beauty is in any sense a sensuous expression of those concepts entertained as such by philosophy, the meaning of art or beauty will be ultimately derivable from the same source as the concepts of reflective thought. If conceptual thought has this relation to the world of perception, it would follow that the significance of beauty would be disposable in abstract statements whereby the affinity of beauty and reflective thought is enunciated. We would expect to find, accordingly, that the reflective thought of any era and the art which is contemporary with it, reveal to us the same world.

What is true of artists in general is true in some degree of dramatists. They are not philosophers; nevertheless, could they be self-conscious, what would they say as to their views of the world? There must sometimes be general principles at the background of thought to suggest the basis of the artist's work, apart from the specific content of the tragic, or other, motive; something to suggest, it may be, what is the infirmity of existence of which man necessarily partakes. The tragic artist may not only give us a portrayal of the tragedy, but also a suggestion of the principle which would account for the occurrence of tragedy in human life.¹³ From an external source, man may be represented as subject to chance or fate; from within, as subject to disintegrating emotion or passion.¹⁴ Again, certain dramas of the Renaissance and of the Enlightenment seem to rest on the failure of knowledge, and to imply that the finite and essentially fallible nature of man is to be sought in the intellectual,

rather than in the moral, powers.¹⁶ In general, ought we not to find recognition of such principles in the philosophy pertinent to the time? To put the problem the other way around: In any epoch of thought in which there is recognized, for example, an irrational element in the concept of knowledge, if it be also an era in which tragic art flourishes, we might be able to find that irrational element recognized in dramatic concepts.

The development of thought does, presumably, show some such relation: namely, that typical attitudes of thought to the problem of tragedy are in reality logical expressions of some more fundamental questions, like that of knowledge. Some such problem was raised by Ruskin: whether or not tragic art could find a solution of the difficulties confronting man by reason of the menacing aspect of destiny. Is art able to do what the wise man of the ancients had attempted in his speculation and moral theory, *i. e.*, escape the world? The question is that of the *rôle* of knowledge in the vulgar spectacle of success or failure.

Just what do we know, then, of the adequacy of knowledge for the ends of endeavor, especially of the ideal of human endeavor as it is embodied in dramatic art? Is there something in the contradictions of the theory of knowledge to suggest the possibility of self-realization, or its impossibility? The question has not to do here with the occurrence of success or unsucess as facts of human experience, but as significant for the whole theory of the universe. Speculation on this point has not followed a single path. We know, for example, that the duplicity of thought has served as a scapegoat for many a sin. The dubious character of sensuous knowledge, when it pretended to final truth, has been commended to us from antiquity;¹⁶ and similarly, the untrustworthy character of conceptual knowledge has been commended to us from an equally venerable past.¹⁷ Another historical heritage is the ethical value of knowledge as the basis of virtue and happiness, equally with its dubious character in that

function. The value of knowledge in matters of conduct is quite likely to be merely negative. That is to say, the insight of the wise man of old is that by which he avoids conflict with the world and is withdrawn from the possibility of happiness and misery alike, in so far as these depend on the world of change.¹⁸ The wisdom of the enlightened man is a discipline of the emotions and passions: this is what it means to follow reason. But certainly where conduct is thought to be subject to a fortune obscure to knowledge, one would hardly expect the function of knowledge to be more than negative. The ascription of failure or success, tragedy or comedy, to destiny or chance, may, perhaps must, suffer some attempt at rationalization in the course of history; and it may turn out that fate, fortune, or chance are but hypostatized unknowable elements in a theory of knowledge.

It is part of the purpose of this essay to show that there is in the more important or better known conceptions and definitions of tragedy such an unknowable element, however consistent the whole definition may be with some allied theory of the universe. The following paragraphs are intended to show how the unknowable element enters the definition; and to show how speculation, in attempting to rationalize the significance of suffering by reference to an unknowable element, apparently makes matters worse than the facts of experience and the principles of knowledge will warrant. The attempt to define tragedy as a very plausible and necessary event contributes to that concept a fearsomeness and dreadful possibility for human destiny. To the fact of tragedy is added an awfulness which it would be comforting to know arises only from the activity of speculation and not from the necessary constitution of the universe. If this be true, then we might commit to medical science and to beneficent legislation the task of mitigating the facts of suffering which, because they are facts, are difficult to mitigate or assuage by the mere assertion of their illusory character. The horrible things which speculation has made out of the

facts of experience are, like the symptoms of disease, more alarming than the illness itself. It would be a service to philosophy to show that the deductions concerning human destiny are far from hitting the truth of the matter, and that they cannot be expected to; since these deductions are based on definite assumptions suggesting the nature and direction of the conclusions drawn from them.

Speculation purports to give us a report of an unknown world other than the world of facts; but we are continually denouncing speculation as a false spy. We like to think of its results as monstrous when they contradict our experience or involve us in further difficulties of thought. We must not forget that there is, after all, a rational value to that knowledge which enables us to attain our ends even against obstacles; for there is present to consciousness, whether the philosophical or the popular, the fact of experience that man may either bend the world to his purposes or be defeated. This, then, is the possibility of comedy: that the world is subject to laws knowable as such, and in conformity with which man can live happily realizing all legitimate desires. In the realization of our desires, in so far as they are dependent on our cognitive relation to the world, the normal relations of knowledge and conduct supply us with the notion that some things are possible to conduct; but that some ideals can never be anything more than ideals. By their very nature, some ideals are outside of the world of actually realizable purposes and may, therefore, never be actualized in so conditional a sphere as this of time and space, of sense and action. Where the external world is adequate to supply us with valid knowledge, or sufficiently docile to be bent to our will and purpose, there would seem to be no question of tragedy at all. At any rate, the only possible denial of human success would be the failure of an act to issue in normal results—a thing explicable on the basis of chastened and corrected knowledge.

But it seems as though idealistic speculation must land us in a skeptical position with respect to the possibility of realizing human purposes here and now. In an idealistic world we are supposed to have power over the issue of actions by the power of thought in that we can interpret the significance of action and its results. No doubt there is always some gain in the thought which makes suffering less. But in the idealistic picture of the universe, the unknowable reach of infinity makes all right; and unless we are willing to accept this picture, we shall be at a loss to interpret as after all somehow good, the failure of an action to issue in normal results. Not even a philosopher can shift easily and immediately to that standpoint when face to face with failure. When the result of an act is either too much or too little for one's purpose, one is embarrassed not only by the actual fact, but also by the difficulties of thought in reducing the results of experience to the values of conceptual thought.¹⁹

Idealistic speculation in trying to make some useful concept out of the fact of suffering has precipitated just those difficulties of thought. The rationalization of that practical joker, brutal fate, has usually taken one of two general directions. The first is the notion of poetic justice, assuming an ultimate reality whose fundamental attribute is an ethical majesty that most jealously resents any squint-eyed doubt of its justice. If this is roughly the position of poetic justice, the other is that which may be called transcendental injustice. That is to say, every finite act, even the most virtuous, is fraught with direful possibilities because by the nature of the universe the finite act disturbs the balance of the infinite: it brings discord into the harmony of the absolute. The sponsor of a finite act must pay a penalty for so being. This may be called justice only by a supreme effort of the will and by the abandonment of the most ordinary notions of common sense.

The old notion of tragic guilt and its accompaniment of poetic justice have latterly fallen under criticism in

some of the great systems of aesthetics.²⁰ The theory has not been found applicable to several great works of art; and the theory has not always been in harmony with the metaphysical basis of aesthetic speculation. The theory of poetic justice as applied to tragedy has sometimes been called the theory of "adequate guilt." The tragic situation for that theory is a compound of elements, moral in their essential nature, between which there is a rigorous reciprocation. Man's relation to the universe is that of a link in an ethico-causal series wherein the occurrence of a particularly human event is adequately evaluated by reference to the moral considerations preceding and following the act. Behind every event is a system of values to explain the purposive relations of man and the world. In such a world the tragic guilt or fault must be morally reprehensible, and the catastrophe must be commensurable with the guilt. The result of the tragedy for the aesthetic judgment must conform to, but do no more than confirm, the moral justice of the universe. The theory is retributive in the sense that Justice holds an even balance; for if it were otherwise, we could not assume that our universe were governed by a benevolent moral power; nor would our universe, from the human point of view, be a rational and consistent whole.

It should not be assumed that the theory of poetic justice has always been dominant in either the popular or the reflective consciousness. It has not always been dominant either in life or in art; and the abandonment of the theory is not distinctively modern. Perhaps the first theory logically divergent is the Aristotelian, or what has sometimes been called the theory of inadequate guilt. This theory is based on a view of beauty which does not include specifically moral situations as part of its field. As Aristotle indicated, the spectacle of a bad man receiving his just deserts, or a good man raised to pre-eminent fortune and happiness, though they may satisfy our moral predilections, do not afford the emotional relief of melodramatic horror demanded by the audience and so

completely afforded by the favorite Oedipus Rex. What Aristotle designed as a practical guide for the dramatist has been taken over into aesthetic theory and has lent itself with facile adaptability to both fact and theory. It is a fact that many persons suffer in a way impossible to equate with their known actions and motives; they are miserable for no assignable cause, except that they are subject to some excusable error, frailty, or defect of judgment. The catastrophe, when this theory is applied to the drama, must have a strict causal development from the fault as the dramatic motive; and even though it is a conscious fault, the catastrophe must be compelled by inevitable conditions.

Whether there are or are not such conditions is not part of the problem; for it is at least a fact that man has at times recognized certain conditions as inevitable. Where the individual assumes such conditions, we have the situation from which is developed the tragedy of moral valor. Here the necessary condition is the performance of a difficult duty knowing that its performance leads to destruction. This is the situation of the servants of Hertha when the necessary ministrations on the goddess entail a penalty of death. The favorite examples are Antigone and Max Piccolomini. It is perhaps a little unfortunate that we have no typically Roman tragedy wherein, as Schlegel pointed out, we should expect to find the binding force of *religio* motivating the self to make a complete surrender to the state in an act of patriotic devotion. There is a modern analogue in the theory of self-realization. For this theory, tragedy is the limiting case of the sacrifice of purely personal values for what is over-personal. Complete sacrifice is the expression of the individual's power to identify himself with values which are impersonal in the sense that no one can attain them and remain an individual. No merely self-preservative act is competent to attain such ends; for the over-personal is of such a kind that it abstracts from the instrumental value of all acts.²¹

Another line of divergence from the Aristotelian theory has taken the direction of a reinterpretation of the reversal of fortune. In hypostatized Fortune has been found the cause of the inevitable conditions and the miserable end of unfortunate men. This theory had widest acceptance in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. A second line of divergence from Aristotle is found in the modern theories of tragic guilt as based on a metaphysical theory. There are two chief expressions of this idea:

1. The necessary limitation of the finite individual to partial moral interests;

2. The necessary contradiction in the inmost nature of the universe by which aspiration is impossible.

These questions receive more extended treatment hereafter. But the outcome of this speculation shows little tendency to regard the relation of the individual to the world as other than ethical. Though the contradictions in ethical faith pass with slight criticism, the philosophical implications are not altogether satisfactory. The regrouping of the old aesthetic material under the influence of the Nineteenth Century idea of the relation of the individual to the universe makes his position intolerable and impossible by allowing him no reality and no possibility of finite achievement.²²

If this can in any sense be regarded as an unsuccessful outcome to speculation, it allows us to point out that the conception of tragedy which is based on it is likewise unsuccessful. The outcome is unsuccessful because it involves contradictions which are the result of speculation itself; because they are contradictions which can be overcome only by recourse to some higher standpoint to which we, as finite beings, cannot attain. We cannot attain that higher standpoint without renunciation of one of the conflicting forces, *i. e.*, ourselves. For so long as thought discovers that our world is only apparently real and consistent, it will, in its function as chastener and clarifier

of the human spirit, convince us of a diremption between the world of ideals and that of actuality. It will convince us that our ideals have no reality and can have none because this is the wrong kind of a world to cause "our valor to act in safety." By raising the whole question of the adequacy of human knowledge for the ends of human endeavor we may be able on that basis to point out irrational elements in various conceptions of tragedy—elements we would have disposed of. In that spirit we may be allowed to undertake what part of the task we may.

III.

The Testimony of the Poets.

Poets may often be found to include testimony to general views of the world and of the ultimate significance of the dramatic facts they portray. How have they succeeded in convincing us that the world is as they have described it? The answer to this question is but a review of a portion of the evidence on which aesthetic speculation rests; the other portion being, of course, observation of life on the part of the aesthetic philosopher, and technical philosophy itself. Practically any point in aesthetic speculation may be illustrated by reference to a work of art. The danger of illustrating theories in this way is that of interpretation. What the critic takes to be the meaning of the poet may not be what the poet himself intended; and the scattered expressions of the poet's own view may be overlooked or ignored.

All those elements or conditions of human conduct which we could wish were otherwise, have been held responsible, at one time or another, for the tragic situation. The poets have tried to make tragedy intelligible by reference to what are, for most people, obvious causes: sin, impiety, passion, error, and conflict of opposing wills. Sometimes they have despaired of complete and satisfac-

tory explanation, and have fallen back frankly on an unintelligible power having the mastery of man's will and casting defiance to his reason. What else can be the "divine enmity," Nemesis pursuing the prosperous man, or the indiscriminate strokes of Fortune?

The dangers of interpretation and the contradictory results to which it leads may be illustrated by reference to the critical estimate of Ruskin,²³ when he points out:

"The adversary chiefly contemplated by the (Greek) tragedians is Fate, or predestinate misfortune, and that under three principal forms: A. Blindness or ignorance not in itself guilty, but including acts which would otherwise have been guilty; and leading no less than guilt to destruction. B. Visitation on one person of the sin of another. C. Repression by brutal or tyrannous strength of a beneficent will."

But by comparison with other views we see that what is meant by tragedy is very largely a matter of interpreting works of art from a personal point of view, and in that matter the greatest latitude prevails. At one extreme is the view that sees in Greek tragedy (especially) the processes of irrational destiny.²⁴ If one must describe this destiny, a near analogy is the diabolical cunning and jealousy of forces which are in themselves impersonal, but which in their results completely disintegrate man's most reasonable views of his world. At the other extreme is the view that the Greek consciousness was able to surmount all contradictions between man and the world, or between men and the gods. Consciousness succeeds in so doing by the doctrine that the intelligible forces of the world and the unintelligible decrees of the gods have the same righteousness for their end. But if we abstract from all those motives on which, we flatter ourselves, the failure of purposes is self-explanatory, there is still left to be explained what we mean by the divine malignity; in

a word, what we mean by Fate, Chance, Fortune, or Destiny.²⁶

The examples of Greek tragedy permit us to infer some such things as follows: There are mysteries in human life, for man becomes in the end what he would not be even in intention; and the result of his action is precisely that against which he would have forearmed himself. Though there may be in some cases ultimate reconciliation, whatever that may mean:²⁶ though there may be a way out of the difficulty from which it would appear that the supreme powers are beneficent;²⁷ yet there is no answer to the question why the gods act thus and not otherwise. The life of man is often one of misery—not necessarily one of penury—but of conflict with abuses of power, wicked policy and evil deeds, or revenge.²⁸ Though it be a fact that individual destiny is one of misery there is no intelligible answer why it is so.²⁹

There are times when the whole spiritual fabric dissolves: namely, when human destiny is ruin. If the objective organization of the world breaks up, it is equally true that there are monstrous things in the spirit of man himself.³⁰ There is something capricious in the external order of events when human endeavor has to do with them; and there is as well a lawlessness in human passions. In the most laudable zeal there is something irrational and unnatural by reason of its very intensity.³¹ If it be a fact that no devotion to a specific principle can be inherently worthy, that no dominant emotion can be safely tolerated; yet, why should it be so? How can we conceive the universe to make these facts intelligible, since to do so seems to demand that all that touches the person most closely must be put aside? Is this merely a question of the clarity of artistic vision and can the hero be saved at will, or must he go down in the fight? If the fault lies deeper than the poet's view of the world, then it may be that tragedy implies a view of the world in which there is no guaranty that the conflicts are

solvable; and no surety that human knowledge is competent to explain the nature of such a world. That there is a question here is evidence that the prophecy of the regeneration of mankind by the liberation of Prometheus has its antithesis in the inevitable destiny of Sophoclean tragedy.

Ruskin finds a wide difference between the classical and the modern conceptions of tragedy in the ability of the poet to find a solution of the difficulty that is at once artistically satisfactory and inoffensive to the belief of the spectator in an orderly world. In modern tragedy, by which Ruskin means Shakespeare, there is no clear vision of a way out that does not involve the spectator in serious difficulties of thought. To the modern poet the sense of defeat is complete; and in the absence of any dominating power to which a rational purpose can be ascribed, there is nothing left but to embrace enthusiastically the immolation of the individual as a sacrifice to a universal moral law. Ruskin says:²²

“The ruling purpose of Greek poetry is the assertion of victory by heroism over fate, sin and death. * * * Shakespeare recognizes for deliverance no gods nigh at hand; and that by petty chance—momentary folly—by broken message—by fool’s tyranny—or traitor’s snare, the strongest and most righteous are brought to ruin. * * * At the close of a Shakespearean tragedy nothing remains but dead march and clothes of burial. At the end of Greek tragedy there are far off sounds of a divine triumph, and a glory as of resurrection.”

If a judgment of this kind is to be accepted as a true generalization, it must be based on an inductive survey of the extant body of dramatic art; but the obstacles to a final judgment are naturally those that meet us in a matter of interpretation. We find ourselves confronted with two extremes. Either we must follow our own notion of what constitutes a tragedy, and reject those which

do not conform to the definition; or we must adopt some definite principles of interpretation. In the latter case we may ask, for each period of the drama, and for each example, in what sense there is destruction and in what sense there is salvation. The latter is the method here adopted; and our conclusion is that there is nothing in the formal conditions of the concept of tragedy to guarantee the continuance of life under the specific conditions of just this or that purpose with which one has identified what is most essential in life, one's individuality. Tragedy means that there is no way out of the difficulties of existence without some change; and that change is violent and implies an absolute degree of change. We can ask in what sense the sacrifice of the finite being is a satisfactory solution of the situation. What is there to offer the reflective consciousness as compensation, if the purposes with which we enter the tangle and struggle with insurmountable difficulties, are not only lost in the solution, but involve the being and personality of the character in the same dissolution?

If as Ruskin says there are far off sounds as of resurrection, we might find a sense in which this is true. One might find that the Greek poet or spectator, with all his keen sense of the misfortune of life, was nevertheless enthusiastically confirmed in his belief in the still-continued goodness of the gods and in his reluctance to admit that the catastrophe he has just witnessed is anything more than an accident. He may be confirmed in his belief that there is a rational principle at work in the world whose purposes, though obscure, are yet righteous; and that when they victimize a man it is for some purpose higher than we can conceive, but one that is also ardently to be desired. The testimony of some modern dramas on this point may or may not bear out Ruskin's dictum, depending on whether or not we are able to accept the fundamental principles which underlie it.

Dramatic conflict in modern times is the evidence of the reality of the spiritual life. Knowledge and achieve-

ment can be partial only; first, because they are specific; and secondly, because nothing specific can be adequate to express the reality of the whole. The destruction of everything local, the falsity of all particular truths, is the earnest of the reality of all Truth.

Modern tragedy has often in view the conflict between some new ideal of society, a new institution, and the old ideas. In the dramas of Ibsen this is the case. The hero is sometimes overcome because the new ideal is not sufficiently purified to become a safe guide, and hence cannot replace the old; or, because trust in the old has not decayed so far that a new ideal may be entertained. If, however, the drama is based on the ideal of the great man or leader as enunciated by Carlyle or Browning the tragic conclusion is shown to be retroactive on the conservative position. The death of the hero, as the representative of the new ideal, comes home to the stronger and conservative power as the loss of the very thing for which it was unconsciously striving; but which in its ignorance was not recognized for such. The death of the hero is the defeat of the conqueror. The individual, even a leader of men, represents only a partial truth; and it will continue to be partial as long as it is identified with an individual spirit. The death of the specific person liberates the new ideal from the limitations of a finite consciousness. The ideal embodied in any habit or institution, or conceived as realizable in some definite way, or as a truth to be expressed in just this or that maxim, is given back to the universe to take its place in the whole life-history of creation; and only in that process can it find its proper worth and expression.

If the defender of the new ideal is overcome in the conflict with traditions, the tragedy must lie in the poverty of man's knowledge to interpret the needs of society; or the inability of the group to apprehend its own well-being except as identified with immediate physical needs. Modern tragedy, as might be expected from the prevalent view of the dynamic nature of truth, exhibits the inade-

quacy of traditional knowledge on the one hand, and on the other the demand for new truth. The modern world is convinced, however, that the truth of things rests, to a large extent, on personal or subjective factors. If then the individual is to have any voice in shaping and determining what is true, the utility of an idea for the time and circumstances should not bring one under condemnation of the law. If the sufficiency of the old ways of thought is the test of truth, it is surely a terrible thing to see an individual destroyed for the sake of society. To decide that one idea or habit is true and another is not, is, after all, an *a priori* judgment; and to pass such a judgment implies on the part of society a sense for truth which is not only not given to the individual, but also one which cannot be gained by him. Whatever this sense may be called: public opinion, or social mind; it is not subject to the will of the ordinary mortal; and it is, therefore, irrational just to the extent of its aloofness from the sphere of our personal and individual knowledge. The real leader who can shape the ideals of society is, in respect of his knowledge, more than mortal and different in kind from the rest of us.

In Browning's *Luria*, for example, we have the spectacle of a people struggling to the completer life of their leader; but they defeat their own prosperity because they lose faith in his integrity. *Luria* dies as an individual to live as the universal, the ideal, which he would have obtained for the Florentines.³³ The destruction of the individual is so common in modern tragic drama that we are at a loss how to place such a thing as Ibsen's *Doll's House*, though we might be sure there is no solution in sight either artistically or practically satisfactory. Here we see a conflict between the new and the old ideas of personal worth. There is a break-up in the traditional views, as there was in the old fashioned home. The heroine dies only in so far as the old mode of life, as a habit, broke down. We fear, however, that she goes forth to her destruction as she leaves the old home, because society has

nothing to put in its place; we fear to trust the stability of her new ideals which, if they were really vital, would soon secure for her well-being a suitable garb as the habit of respectability.

The inability of modern tragic art to secure a solution of the difficulties, as suggested by Ruskin, is strictly in accord with the idea mentioned above that tragedy assures us of the reality of the spiritual in some of its functions, such as the social whole. The dramatic artist is face to face with a two-fold issue: 1, the inherent dislike to have all difficulties solved by a return to the old and traditional; and 2, the skepticism of all that pretends to be more than temporary, or toward all that assumes to have more worth than finite things can have. Hence all that is effete, all that is pretentious, must perish. Thereafter, the demands of beauty are quite satisfied with the mere enunciation of the new ideal; and the artist need not concern himself with working out to its final results the ideal he has championed. The fact that specific truths, no less than claims to universal truth, are denied makes imperative the progressive working out of all truth. This is what may be called the reality of the life-history. It is the spectacle of the individual sacrificing himself for the sake of the ultimately true in order that the ideal with which he has identified himself may contribute its share to the working out of the truth of the universe. Not this, nor that, truth; not this, nor that, belief or conceit, is ultimately true; but there is always truth being accomplished. As we are beginning to realize, this demands that one take up his cross in the cause of truth; but in the pursuit of life's set prize there is for each of us compromise, self-sacrifice and defeat.

When we stop to ask in what sense a principle of interpretation yields valid results, we are forced to take into consideration the testimony of the period under investigation. It may be that the sense in which there is or is not a way out of the difficulty of a tragic situation, is itself an implication of fundamental views of the world.

These views are things which change from epoch to epoch; and their implications change. With this as a guiding thread, what change, if any, takes place in such an idea as that of the "falls of princes" when traced through typical moments of thought? Here we can use the ideas of the tragic poets themselves, of philosophy, and of aesthetic speculation. The starting point of the problem is found in certain dramas of the Renaissance that enunciate the question quite clearly: namely, Marlowe's *Edward II*, Shakespeare's *King Richard II*, and others referred to in turn.

IV.

The Misfortunes of Great Men.

Certain facts in the consciousness and literature of Elizabethan England have been pointed out as indicating a growing sense of the unreal." There is, for example, the fame of the great pirates holding letters of marque from the crown; they have as their counterparts the picaresque heroes of popular story. Within gentle society there was the conceit of pastoralism; and in contrast to it, the savage deeds of actual daily existence—brawling, infamy, and sacrilege. However all these witness to mental qualities out of the ordinary, there is one more to be added to the list: man's loss of conceit with his own power of understanding. As Ruskin pointed out, Elizabethan tragedy usually ends in doubt and criticism, not only of the world, but also of the spirit. The early Renaissance was characterized by a searching criticism of the bases of knowledge, of the reality of ideals, of the possibility of realizing ends, and of the superiority of the individual over the world. We can, possibly, find a tragedy of intellectual bankruptcy: a breaking up of knowledge which is a fulfillment of the Middle Ages. The scholastic philosophy had left as a general heritage to mankind certain conceits of pure intellect: *credo ut intel-*

ligam, and *universalia ante res*. This faith which is constitutive of knowledge is a function of the universe not belonging to finite reason. It is not a mental function at all; but another faculty above reason, a revelation which at first hand apprehends the truths of the universe. The eternal truths are *universalia ante res*.

Whatever else the Renaissance may be, it is, for philosophy, a criticism of the conceits of nativism. Those elements of life like dogma and custom and traditional truth, which have risen to the rank of universals, are pretensions and conceits only, aspiring to the constitutive validity of the real universal ideas. Nativism, therefore, is the conceit of pure intellect and it is against this pretension that the Renaissance criticism is directed. The thesis of Petrus Ramus was an expression of a symptom of the Renaissance. In 1536 he defended the proposition: *Quaecunque ab Aristotele dicta sunt, commenticia sunt*.³⁵ Bacon's skeptical clearing of the ground for a new method of knowledge is a tacit assault on the mental habits of the Sixteenth Century. When Descartes retired to his superheated, airtight room for meditation, was it not in default of scholastic learning to guarantee the validity of knowledge?

So also Marlowe's Faustus, like Petrus Ramus, passes in review the traditional knowledge of the Middle Ages: logic, law, physic, divinity; and finds them all equally impotent to give him the chiefest desire of his heart—control of the world. He covets for a time the occult knowledge of an irrational science, the arch-anomaly of an intellectualistic age. By astrology, the last stand of a conceited intellect, he hopes to be armed against vicissitude and defeat. There go by the board also, with the traditional bodies of knowledge, some of the peculiarly sacred ideas of the church, unrealities on which the mind had been surfeited. The idea of God and all the sweet old cant of the church are, for Faustus, illusion. Repentance and prayer are "fruits of lunacy that make men foolish that do trust them most. * * * Also thinkest

thou that Faustus is so fond as to imagine that after this life there is any pain? Tush, these are trifles and mere old wives' tales."³⁶

Here we have the Renaissance in the first flush of its glory, with its criticism of ideas supposed to be the very foundation of knowledge; with its searching of the inner aspects of life without reserve or shame. The whole conceit of transcendental knowledge falls away in balancing the values traditionally ascribed to the realms of grace and sin. Man is unable to obtain by the old theological knowledge what he is promised by faith. Those things, salvation and blessedness, which faith promises, must come here and now if they would be useful to us. Yet the task men set for themselves of rebuilding their view of the world proved too ambitious when limited by the inadequate mental apparatus bequeathed them by the Middle Ages. Man could not save himself by means of that knowledge alone. Hence, we see men out of conceit with intellect; for the world without some conceivable reason for being is as useless as the soul of a Faustus without knowledge.

One of the interesting traditions to come under criticism was that of the divine right of kings. For a time men could rationalize the falls of princes. Greatness, for Boethius, was not a good in itself and might be expected, therefore, to bring with it the usual accompaniment of evil. The violation of any one of the pillars of kingship was sufficient cause for calamity when men sought for causes to protect their ideal from attack.³⁷ It was a simple matter of violating the law of God; for sin, as we know, brought punishment. A scapegoat was soon found to explain why it was that the great ones of earth have more than their share of calamity. For the church fathers, the ruler was the vicar of God and, whether right or wrong, His representative. The character of the ruler, according to another idea, was suited to the moral condition of the people over whom he ruled—a vicious application of the principle of retributive justice. This

ideal could not long have been satisfactory. Certainly there are expressed ideas which indicate questioning of the principle. Suppose a king abuses his power or pronounces inequitable judgments. If virtue is the goodness of mind which is productive of right living and of no evil, and yet evil overtakes a people, then we have the situation covered by separating the concept of kingship from the king as a person. The judgment of a king may be erroneous; but no doubt can assail the justice of the throne. The state is of divine origin; but rulers cannot be without sin. It is requisite, then, that the king himself take the first step in Christian virtue—obeying the law.

There is a law higher than royal edicts to which the king is subject; and his relation to that law stamps him as true prince or tyrant hostile to his people. The ideas of John of Salisbury are typical and luminous. There is a general harmony in things which, if observed, would give to each thing its proper nature and reward. The preservation of a just proportion in matters of the state is governed by what we call equity. It is to this divine law of eternal justice that the prince is subject. The distinction between prince and tyrant turns on conformity to this law whose rule is equity." It is easy to see that any abuse of power is a tyranny which cannot help causing disaster simply because it is a violation of divine law. This is an intelligible explanation so long as we consider the matter in a political or ethical way. But this, which is so much a matter of course, comes later to be a source of disaffection and a criticism of vicegerency. The idea that the king is God's vicar by divine appointment finds a contradiction in the sin of the ruler who is without conscience." Though divinity reside in kingship, aptness of man to sin, when the latter can no longer be condoned, must cast suspicion on the divinity.

The criticism took the form: Why should a king by divine right come to an unhappy end?" Thus, there is a speculative problem, apart from the ethical, the answer

to which is satisfactory except when we remember that the human mind may be incapable of knowing the decrees of that heavenly equity. It is just here that the two sides of the problem meet. The tradition of the divine right of kings has little content in fact for the Renaissance; the formal tradition has little utility in the idea of the state as a constitutional government. No one can know the ultimate laws of Justice; no one can answer the question why the king by divine right comes to an unhappy end without denying the divinity of the fallen prince. The popular reflection of the idea we find in the dramas of Elizabethan times embodying the question of the king's unhappy end: for example, Marlowe's *Edward II*, Shakespeare's *Richard II*, and *King John*.

There is something baffling to the understanding in the fall of a mighty king. He may misrule; but the idea that greatness is in itself somehow hateful to Fortune is a tradition that must justify its claim to our credence, or be discarded—especially so in an age which desired mastery very much for its own sake. Therefore, it is not simply that a king may misrule and thus something is found on which to lay the blame;⁴¹ but it is the notion that as every point of the wheel of Fortune comes uppermost, so it must immediately descend as the wheel rolls on.⁴² To a certain extent, indeed, the law contemplated the perversity of royal whim; since the old civil law, having in view the absolute power of the king, regarded the prince's pleasure as having the force of law.⁴³ But the divinity of kings lies only in their sovereignty, *i. e.*, in those attributes which they have and which subjects have not. The king is an essence which, having more attributes than that of ordinary men, is therefore a higher and better being—a good mediaeval notion. A king without a kingdom is nothing; and the stars dare be as unkind to a king as to a peasant.⁴⁴

If we consider that group of Elizabethan tragedies which is concerned with the doleful falls of princes we find some consciousness of the irrational residue left when

the moral demands have been satisfied. A question is left after retributive justice has done its work. Marlowe's Edward II is a king who presumes upon the narrow margin of legality accorded the king's whim; but Edward's perversity is pushed to an extreme not contemplated by statesman nor tolerable to subject. The thought that there is within the state so uncontrollable a factor as a king cannot be tolerable where there is any sense of individual worth. There can be a community of interest where the king identifies his interest with that of the state; but there can be none where the king is the only real individual in the kingdom. A king is after all only a specific person—one among others; kingship is only one factor in the whole activity of the state. We have here the philosophical problem of how one among others may be the only reality; the difference being that this problem arises within the lines of governmental polity. That in the state, *e. g.*, law, which has more reality than any specific thing by itself, is fundamental to the existence and continuance of even a king.

Moral consciousness, as far as it is grounded on the conception of law as fundamental, is perfectly satisfied that a king like Edward II should perish for his non-comprehension of the local fitness of things, to say nothing of the more fundamental but more vague eternal fitness. Moral consciousness finds its contradiction in the popular consciousness of the sympathetic spectator of the drama. The condemnation of the king is sufficient for morality; but the complete change of fortune bringing with it the horrible abuse of power, temporary indeed, and usurped in the name of the state and of justice; and the inhuman misery of the king in his fallen state: all these bring uppermost in mind the irrationality of fortune whose compensation is not payment in kind. "Contempt is transmuted into sympathetic grief that any king could so fall."⁴⁵ It is interesting to find a curious confirmation of this revulsion of feeling against fortune in Daniel's drama *Philotas*, in which the chorus "vulgarly

(according to their affections, carried rather with compassion on great men's misfortunes than with consideration of the cause) frame their imaginations by that square, and censure what is done."¹⁶

In Shakespeare's *King Richard II* the old dogma of kingship is again brought into question. Gaunt quite distinctly says not even a king can act contrary to natural laws. York, though a member of the king's party, implies that because the institutions of the state are the outcome of the whole life of the people, they cannot be set aside at the pleasure of the ruler. The justice of Bolingbroke's claim to the throne rests on the principle that a king's allegiance, like that of any subject, is first of all to the state itself. There is a suggestion as to the true nature and end of the state, as a commercial society, in *King John*. The conduct of this prince raises the question how far the good of the state can be identified with a king's caprice raised to a superlative degree. It is here that a people filled with a sense of power, commercial and intellectual, can give the laugh to a king. It was an ironical laugh at the predicament into which John had fallen by his own shortsighted policy; and it was, moreover, a situation like that of Edward II or Richard II in which the cumbersome and paradoxical logic of the church had no efficacy. It was a situation which gave the lie that quaint but irrational dictum: "When Fortune means to men most good, she looks on them with a threatening eye."¹⁷

It would obviously be impossible to give a summary of all expressions of opinion on the irrationality of fortune. The number of such expressions is enormous even within a limited period. Attention is here directed to one aspect, *viz.*, Fortune's waywardness and how it is to be overcome. The trend of thought on this point during the Seventeenth Century may be indicated in the following steps:

1. The falls of princes suggest to man's emotional nature the whim of Fortune rather than man's responsibility for his own disaster.

2. The irrationality of fortune, when abstracted from the circumstances of personal character, suggests a world ruled by undiscoverable causes; and there is no equality between the inconstancy of Fortune and the status of her victims.

3. Since the only semblance of justice discoverable in Fortune is her proneness to wayward action, the only hope of overcoming her is, by a change of mental attitude, to overcome the outer world within the self.

4. Finally, reflection reaches a stage where reason is able to override not only the emotion which makes us fear the change of fortune; but also to condemn, if not to stifle, those grosser passions to which, it might be supposed, Fortune is especially antipathetic.

What the Enlightenment had achieved by the end of the century as a permanent acquisition is already prefigured at the beginning of the Seventeenth Century. From almost any one of numerous expressions in such a thing as Sackville's Induction, or the Complaint of Henry Duke of Buckingham, we may start toward the goal set by reason: namely, a complete rationalization of the world; and specifically, the emancipation of the individual from subjection to the changes of fortune. Henry complains that no earthly state is durable. The full significance is not apprehended till one places his trust in those things usually considered of most worth—in honors, in kingly authority. In such high places there is to be found at last nothing but the false smile of Fortune. There is nothing that man can accomplish by wit or by guile which can be in any sense permanent. The acquisition of life's goods is subject to chance even from the beginning; and once having

* * * "felt the wheel

Of slipper fortune, stay it maught no stowne,

The wheel whirls up, but straight it whirleth down.""
As the old adage teaches: "All things return to their origin"; and with this inheritance from oriental antiquity, more than one thoughtful mind has been obsessed.

It is difficult to tell in such expressions how much is mere conceit: how much is sincere. But it is indeed significant that even among the Elizabethans were some who could couple the idea of Fortune with a solution for its mischances. Nicholas Breton in his dialogue between Wit and Will finds the solution in that person in whom "reason rules wit"; yet therein we find Will voicing the common sentiment:

"Believe me, sweet Wit, there is such falling out with Fancy, who shifts all upon Folly. Such exclamation upon Folly, who brings them to Fortune: such cursing and banning of Fortune, for her froward dealing: in gentle helping them up upon her wheel, and then sudden dinging them down (almost to their destruction), that if there be a Hell in this world, there is the place."

Robert Greene, the pamphleteer, had also learned his lesson from antiquity to good purpose. He not only borrowed the conception of fortune as defined by Epicurus; but he divined as well the remedy for her humors." He expressed the idea that the remedy for fortune lay within the self; and that is what is here called "overcoming the outer world within the self." The idea has had a venerable history which may be recounted for its own sake and not simply to satisfy an historical method.

V.

Overcoming the Outer World Within the Self.

1. THE IDEA IN THE ANCIENT WORLD.

The beginning of speculation on the remedies for fortune may, perhaps, be found in Aristotle; but on this point the same latitude of interpretation that was found in the case of the tragic poets recurs. The range of the interpretation lies between what passes for the complete rationalization of the tragic situation, and the ironical destruction of the guiltless hero.⁵⁰ We have in the following statement an attempt at rationalization:⁵¹

“The tragic idea lies both in the fact that the hero is the agent, the cause of his own ruin, and that the disaster is not simply an accident befalling an individual, but a natural consequence of truly human actions; the hero’s fault must represent an error of judgment, the insufficiency of the human mind to cope with the mysterious complex of this world.”

Here we have the statement that the tragic situation is not an accident: hence somehow it is rational; but, error is a universal human trait in a mysterious world. In other words, we may be able to point out the fact of tragedy; but we cannot equate the power of the human mind as adequate to the task of understanding that world. Mind has power neither to correct its own errors, nor to comprehend the purpose of the universe.

It may be, therefore, as Eucken points out,⁵² that the problem of tragedy does not lie so much in the contradictions within the person, as in his conflicts with the world. But Aristotle gives expression to just the opposite idea.⁵³ If misery followed as a consequence of non-virtuous activity we would have the ordinary idea of moral retribution. But in so far as Aristotle regards the

life of rational contemplation as the final *entelechy* of conduct, happiness does not, it would seem, depend on man's relation to the world and its mischances. His happiness does depend on the degree to which he has become independent of all that is extraneous, or rather indifferent, to his true life;⁵⁴ for in fact, luck or chance cannot materially affect either his happiness or his misery. There are, however, difficulties in the attainment of the complete life of virtue which may well enough destroy a man's happiness. A man needs external resources for activity in accordance with virtue, though he need not be lavishly provided with them. He needs moderate wealth and a measure of external prosperity: "for his nature is not sufficient of itself for speculation; it needs bodily health, food, and care of every kind." He needs leisure. But a greater difficulty lies in choosing a mean state, for which accurate judgment is requisite to subsume the particular case under the right rule.⁵⁵ A man who is not completely virtuous has, therefore, an element of weakness, fallibility of judgment, or incomplete indifference to the world. For such a person it is also true that the world has an element of caprice, metaphysical and incomprehensible, reflecting the instability of the person. For chance is an irreducible element from which the external life of man will suffer, and from which he may recover only with difficulty.⁵⁶

If it be true that Greek tragedy represents man's infirmity as a susceptibility to misfortune and unavoidable destiny, there is at least a wide difference between the destruction of the individual as an undifferentiated atom of the world and that of the individual as the most highly organized system of nature. It is very much in the former manner that Greek tragedy recognizes man as subject externally to fate or chance.⁵⁷ From this point of view there is a near approach to the rationalization of externality as the unrecognized lawfulness of the world. Here in Greece the minds of men are steadily advancing,

for a time at least, toward a consistent view of the lawfulness of nature. Chance and fate are not absolutely irrational; for they perform functions afterward ascribed to reason: they may be overcome by a right attitude of mind; or they may be but temporary aberrations from the normal order. Thus in Aeschylus, "the paradoxical changes of fortune can be accepted with a child-like faith that they are the decrees of higher but still beneficent powers." When the outcome is in accordance with the accepted legend, and wrong in the world is only temporary; or where the possibility of fortunate issue, though not certain, is still contingent, then the artistic taste of neither dramatist nor spectator is offended by the orthodox solution. "Evil is not always the work of unqualifiedly adverse gods, nor of an illogical and hopelessly irrational universe," but sometimes of perverse and ill-minded men. These Kreons, whose understanding is static with their strange ideas, form an irrational element. Ultimately without doubt the universe must answer for the presence of such men; but the fact that it can be quizzed for an answer has not yet come to clear consciousness.

In literature the gods are often represented as taking the place of reason. The will of the gods is an abstraction for the necessary connection of events. Moreover, what is ascribable to chance or coincidence may be regarded as the work of a god, whether the incident be lucky or unlucky, and it thus becomes intelligible to a certain type of mind. When the free action of reason in causation is not yet recognized, that which is inexplicable on the basis of purposive action, clearly belongs to what, for the time being, will be an irrational world; at least to a world other than that of sense. When what is otherwise inexplicable is brought into the sphere of art, it moves as the result of unknown causes in the external world, following on the unpredictable designs of a superior will and reason. The gods who sway all things have a right to be a bit unpredictable and arbitrary as the basis

of securing reconciliation.⁵⁸ That, of course, explains nothing, for it explains everything.

The two-fold suggestion is that Fate is not only a rigorous system working against the plans of men; but also that it is the artistic representation of the natural necessity of the world recognized by philosophy under various forms. But the remedies for fate and misfortune suggested by the development of thought in the Hellenistic period are mainly of a negative character, and carry with them a confession of helplessness against the world's adversity. Resignation of the human powers to chance or fate, and practical wisdom with its maxims, rest upon negative rather than upon positive values. Although man sought for release from superstition about the gods, and from the uncertainties of bodily existence, his philosophical calm was purchased at great expense by devotion to impossible ideals. If we ask what causes things to happen, and we answer: it was fated to be so, or it was just chance; "the sting of both lies in the denial of human endeavor."⁵⁹ What man has lost by asking the simple question, he buys back at tremendous sacrifice in the shape of new gods.⁶⁰ Stoic, Epicurean, and Skeptic worship at the same shrine.

The defeat of chance for the Stoic lies in the harmony of the self. But if a man would avoid entanglements and misfortune, he must secure his inner harmony by conformity to that Nature so very subject to law, and so very fateful in its results, that it is in effect governed by a necessity which is beyond scrutiny for man's reason. It is in that respect irrational, and it has the consistency of inconstancy. The formative principle is indeed described as an immanent reason; and if a man would find happiness, let him habituate himself to the necessity and reason which he finds in nature.⁶¹ The aim of the individual is, must be, identical with that of the universal reason. This is secured by an apotheosis of will; so that, whatever happens, I would not have it otherwise. Were it to happen otherwise, *i. e.*, in accordance with my

momentary desire, my world would have been irrational and governed by chance. The reality of the universal reason is embodied in the polity of the Roman Empire whose universal purposes hold the individual man in subjection. The sting of fate indeed deprives man of action; but the Stoic, by the resignation of his individual will, welcomes both fate and sting. He is not one whit the less subject to vicissitude, though he has received again his right to act; he still suffers defeat, but not at the expense of his spiritual integrity.

To overcome an outer world over which in fact man has no control, is to overcome the world within the self. In the case of the Epicurean this is accomplished by the elevation of desire. Chance is rife in the world of Epicurus: even the atoms take on gratuitous motion in their fall through the void. This is something like an independence of law;" though, as we saw above, this point was open to another interpretation. The Epicurean seized on this aspect of irresponsible action in the external world in the sense that the world is equally free from final causes and the interference of the deity."³ The wise man need not fear the internal consequences to himself of this state of things. The opinions of the masses, who do fear it, are indeed mainly superstition; but knowledge, virtue, and happiness are independent of change, chance, and fortune. The "just" man directed by reason is impervious to the chance of fortune, or to the irrationality of change."⁴ Science exists solely to ennoble us by banishing our fears on matters of high import: namely, the fear of death, of nature, and of the limitations of desire."⁵

There is nothing mysterious about nature when she becomes in the light of reason nothing more than what we see in her. Representations and beliefs depend for their truth on perceptions. Again there is no interference of a deity to which an arbitrary fate could be due; for all things occur by mechanical causes. Hence it is superstition that is irrational;" to it is due the apparent irrationality of the external world. Suppose disaster

should overtake a man: there is nothing irrational about that fact, for it is explicable. If it is not explicable by cause and effect, let a man examine his maxims of conduct for ignorance of some point which he might have avoided. There can be nothing incomprehensible about a fact; for, as a fact, it is as we perceive it. It is fear itself that is irrational, and not the fearful thing. Fear is something in the heart: something indeed that canonic and ethics can hardly quiet. But if logic has any virtue and cogency, it is demonstrably certain that fear, *e. g.*, the fear of death, is no concern of ours.⁶⁷

The Skeptics also undertook to overcome the outer world within the self. From the instability of things and the relativity of perceptions, they argued that nothing possessed any quality absolutely, but only through habit and custom.⁶⁸ Our perceptions are neither true nor false, since real things are inaccessible to us. It is not for us to pass judgment on a world whose nature is so foreign to human necessities of truth; and a matter so foreign to human concerns as truth in the external world may be banished from the mind. Nothing befalling from without need disturb the wise man's tranquility; for he will be one who reserves judgment in any case. If then we have raised ourselves by an act of will to a position of indifference on all matters of human history, disasters individual or collective, both they and the nature of the external world will be incomprehensible in that they are so thoroughly alien to man's true self. No longer is the wise man wise by wisdom; but by avoiding life; it is this end that his maxims of conduct serve; and to doubt his inner security is tragedy.

2. THE IDEA IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

All the responsibility for overcoming the outer world cannot be put upon the self: some more stable basis for the harmony of the individual and the world must be found. The Middle Ages cast the responsibility for a rational world on the providence of God and the ultimate righteousness of His plans for man's destiny. Man neces-

sarily shares in this responsibility since he is the highest end of creation. But in so far as man cannot reconcile his desire for freedom with the plan of divine grace he is himself the author of his own misfortune.

It is a mistake to suppose that any one view correctly describes the Middle Ages in their entirety. There was great variety of opinion on this point: The gifts of Fortune are not moral goods and cannot be expected to be other than calamitous.⁶⁹ Man can by will choose the ignoble and for that choice shall suffer.⁷⁰ Man is by nature evil and cannot make atonement for infinite guilt by means of his finite capacities.⁷² Yet evil and misfortune are useful disciplines in manifesting the providence of God.⁷² In each of these views is something unexplained. Perhaps for purposes of illustration the views of Boëthius will suffice; for in him we have the transition from antiquity to the distinctly Christian view: the conflict between pagan Fortune and Christian Providence.

The most patent fact of the external world, for Boëthius, as it relates to man's well-being, is the fact of change. In this respect change of fortune, or the changeableness of the world, means change in personal circumstances. If any supreme good can be found: if happiness, for example, is a supreme good; it will not be found in aught that can be taken from us. Happiness, therefore, cannot rest on Fortune whose nature it is to be unstable; nor can any good be found in the gifts of Fortune whose habit it is to withdraw what she has once granted. Her gift heralds its own withdrawal; and as her only constancy is change, good fortune, especially, is but the presage of future calamity. It is characteristic of Fortune that she disposes of her gifts most erratically to the just and the unjust alike. But if powers and dignities, Fortune's gifts, were intrinsically good they would never fall to the lot of the wicked who do not deserve them. We see the wicked in possession of such gifts more especially because it is a law of the universe that like consorts

with like. It should not surprise us then, since the union of opposites is repugnant to nature, that when wicked men should so generally possess the best gifts at the disposal of Fortune, that calamity should be their lot. Kings are *par excellence* the bearers of power and dignity; yet kings have as their lot more misery than felicity. Power, being too weak to preserve itself, commonly promises a reversal of fortune. What is glory or fame compared to eternity? For as there is no comparison between the finite and the infinite, so there is nothing desirable, no natural good in any gift of Fortune; and it is just the indiscriminate strokes of Fortune by which kingdoms are overturned, that tragedy bewails.⁷⁴

The influence of this idea is traceable long after. It is this to which Chaucer refers, as much as to Aristotle, when he says tragedy is the story of the misery and wretched end of one fallen from high degree and prosperity.⁷⁵ The same idea we find in Puttenham: "Tragedy deals with the doleful falls of unfortunate and afflicted princes for the purpose of reminding men of the mutability of fortune and of God's just punishment of a vicious life."⁷⁶ The irrational element is here too fundamental for a superficial ascription of the falls of princes to mere sin or depravity. The problem is related to the wider one of evil. Where the created world is by nature unreal and imperfect, and man by nature sunk in guilt, we must face an intolerable contradiction with the providence of God.⁷⁶ Even where thought adhered to the idea of guilt as a free act, there was an unanswered problem in the incompatibility of a world of guilt under the dominance of omnipotent goodness. The omnipotent nature of God's goodness is not incompatible with the absorption of a finite amount of evil; but that would not rationalize the course of history when, as we see later, dramatic art turned a questioning eye upon that very problem of the falls of "unfortunate and afflicted princes." Not all the responsibility for the condition of the outer world should fall on the self; but the tradition of fate and fortune

must be broken down. Here the burden shifts back to nature to declare herself lawful and subject to reason.

A renaissance is a challenge to tradition; and if the Renaissance is found to be a warring of traditions, it is also in some sense an emancipation from them. The Renaissance is the essentially new in all departments of thought. The individual in the state is subject, as Machiavelli saw, to untoward chance from the tyranny of warlike and wicked men. Order is the result of the absolute power of a ruler to whom, as Hobbes also thought, the freedom of the individual is transferred irrevocably in order to receive it back as freedom from injustice. On the other hand the individual suffers unwarrantably from the tyrant whose will is fateful and of universal scope throughout the realm. Here the citizen takes his stand on the rights flowing from that law which is superior to king and subject alike; and to which all positive law is subordinate.

In the sphere of knowledge, the antimony of certainty and uncertainty is not ultimately prejudicial to the individual. Human knowledge, for Cusanus, is conjecture; and in fact it is nothing but the knowledge of our ignorance. The world itself, in its entirety, is an articulate whole wherein the quantitative aspects at least are evidence of reason. Where the universe is a system of regularly moved particles of mass, as for Galilei and Kepler, the harmony of the world is made comprehensible mathematically by the laws of occurrence and change. Mathematics is the rational factor; and the lawfulness of the world itself is its rational consistency. It is a consistency inherent in itself and not one imposed on it from without. Therefore, knowledge is certain so far as it results from measurement or quantitative ratios; but where sense and mathematics go not, as in human passions and ends, there is uncertainty.

The desire to rule the external world is not only a demand for freedom of thought which the enlightened man claims against the Middle Ages; but it is a demand

for a clear and distinct thought claimed from the external world, if that world be truly rational. If nothing beyond reason can be authoritative or true, then commit all nature to scrutiny in the dry light of reason. When nature is rational, when in fact she is reason, and only that nature is rational which is ordered, formal, and abstract; then, as for Berkeley, nature as the external world is not her own existence (is not self-subsistent), but depends for its existence on an act of judgment as of the divine mind. Likewise the freedom of the human spirit depends on its consistency with external truths which are the fundamental judgments of an orderly world. In so far as conduct may be said to be an action in the body politic (analogous to motion or change in the physical world), that conduct must also be made up of rational acts. But here passion is a disturbing element; and because it is impulsive and irrational it is responsible for disorganized situations in conduct. In another sense, also, impulsive conduct is incapable of complete and true worth or of supplying us with valid knowledge of the external world. Perhaps this is why the dramatic art of the Seventeenth Century scores to the account of passion so much tragic failure; and therefore finds disaster not so terrible, for the causes of that failure have no real part in the structure of truth. Again as in the Hellenistic period, the fact of disaster should have no real effect on the mind disciplined by reason. It was at this point that the Renaissance had arrived in its speculation on the problem of tragedy as a fact in history; and that gave occasion for popular consciousness to regard the instability of fortune rather than the immediate causes of unhappiness and failure.

3. THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY AND THE ENLIGHTENMENT.

We saw that the unhappiness of the great men of history suggested the irrationality of Fortune; and that the means of defeating her lay in overcoming the outer world within the self. To have reached this moment in the analysis of the problem implies that further steps had been taken to render the problem somewhat different from that with which the start had been made. The problem of tragedy is no longer for the end of the Seventeenth Century what it had been for the beginning: no longer the fall of great men, but the defeat of great minds. This implies for one thing that unhappiness is to be sought in the irrationality of emotion rather than in that of a mystical fortune. The "clothes of burial" are prepared for the soul caught in its own mazes of passion; and the "glory as of resurrection" is for the rational soul. The death of the hero is but the occasion for a display of greatness of soul; the significance of death is but that of a stage death. For the disciplined soul there is in fact no tragedy at all. Let us see what an analysis of this idea will reveal.

The Seventeenth Century had partially succeeded in the task begun by the Renaissance. The world had come to be a rational whole in which superstition and emotion are unreal." "Nature is a machine whose transparent wheelwork allows of no magic and no sorcery."⁷³ Emotion is now an irrational element and cannot be reckoned with; nor can intellect and prudence brook compromise with it. Dramatic art in this period is the drama of emotional disintegration. Ordinarily the emotional and the intellectual have equal value with us, provided each keeps to its proper sphere. But in the time of Racine a dramatic conflict could hardly have been found between personal emotion and world reason, each having equal right, as for Hegel. But for Corneille, or Racine, the tragic conflict would have been what the

Seventeenth Century would naturally have expected from a personality undisciplined by reason. This epoch regarded conduct motivated by emotion as essentially misleading. That conduct only was safe which flowed from enlightened self-interest and calculated prudence.

Even before the death of Shakespeare there was a popular counterpart of the philosophical consciousness taking the form of a disaffection with the complexities of life that follow on the unrestrained, unreflective, self-assertive act. The stage had instructed popular consciousness only too well in the mysteries of emotion and conduct. They have in fact lost their mysteriousness; for disaster is now to be traced directly to its source—passion. The loss of seriousness, and an unwillingness to wrestle with the world in its serious aspects, is just the feeling that life at its worst is not tragic but only pathetic; that things might have been otherwise with a little more self-control; and that destructive situations are not ineluctable. It is not only possible, but incumbent, upon the Jacobean and Caroline dramatists to resolve strained situations in accordance with their facile character. Tragedy within the sphere of reason is impossible; it is pushed out beyond ordinary concepts and made fictitious.⁷⁹ If this be the negative, then there was also a positive side in the widening range of reason in science and philosophy, carrying with it not only a sense of the futility of struggling against the irrational, but also a sense of the calamitous nature of passion (their generic term for all emotional motives). There was also the paradoxical attempt in philosophy to bring emotion within the intellectual scheme of nature, but at the same time to relegate it to the umbral margin of reason.

The philosophy of the Seventeenth Century is a history of this idea; and within philosophy are numerous expressions of a definite and intense consciousness that not only virtue but safe conduct are functions of knowledge; whereas evil and adverse destiny are functions of emotion in its paradoxical position. Descartes points out

that "virtue is ordinarily opposed to pleasures, to appetites, and to passions"; but that "the light of reason affording a true knowledge of the good, prevents virtue from becoming false".⁸⁰ In the development of Cartesian ideas in the field of ethics, Geulincx makes this statement:⁸¹

"The contempt into which the most precious things fall among men when they think them too well known, is especially true of our reason, whose utterances are far less regarded (by the ordinary man), than the shows of sense and phantasy, although these have their seat in the bodily life, radically foreign to the soul, and they can only darken the knowledge of our self and of its true interests."

In Spinoza's inspiring view of man and his relation to the universe, it is man's littleness and bondage, his insignificance in the scheme of things, for which emotion is accountable; but man's freedom and greatness lie in understanding: in the knowledge and love of God—that is to say: of Reason, of Nature. Spinoza says, for example:⁸²

"To act absolutely in obedience to virtue, is to act . . . in accordance with the dictates of reason on the basis of seeking what is useful to oneself." But, "human infirmity in moderating or checking the emotions I name bondage; for when a man is a prey to his emotions, he is not his own master, but lies at the mercy of fortune; so much so, that he is often compelled, while seeking that which is better for him, to follow that which is worse."

Racine and Molière may be taken as representatives of opposite phases of the drama of erroneous and disintegrating emotion. The undisciplined personality of

Racine's tragedy has its counterpart in the onesided person of the satiric comedy. Consider Racine's Phèdre for example. Hippolytus is governed throughout by the maxims of a mind seasoned and disciplined by reason. He has a contempt for all acts unmotivated by a good will. In every situation the prudential motives are of more weight than the emotional; for universal laws, rather than feelings, govern the conduct of a man who is eminently virtuous.⁸³ Phaedra, while acknowledging that duty makes imperative demands on the character, is ungoverned by reason. She has in her something blamable which no person governed by reason would tolerate. She is one, disintegrated on the emotional side, to whom the eternal verities are as if they were not. One so oblivious to the law of God, or reason (the two are one), is flouting the face of a just governance of the universe.

A condign punishment is found for this disrupted integrity, a disruption based on a theory of knowledge. Yet we can understand that in the eyes of Racine's auditors she does not suffer unwarrantably—a thing contrary to the spirit of the age.⁸⁴ We see the significance of Lessing's remark that "it is a horrible conception that there is a person who is unhappy through no fault of his own . . . are we to cherish it, we, whom reason and religion should convince that it is no less blasphemous than untrue?"⁸⁵ It is also clear why Lessing calls the drama of this period a drama of wonder. It inculcates the love and admiration for God's goodness, perhaps unconsciously following Spinoza's tuition. As Leibniz remarks: "The love of God demands that we should acquiesce in all that He has done." Greatness of soul will overcome all obstacles and all expression of pain. The death of Hippolytus is thus meant as a triumph over death. He perishes before the desolating sweep of passion, it is true; but rather as a moral to a fable. Despite change of fortune, he dies *mens conscia recti*; reconciled to the universe by reason of his greatness and as a reward

for his rectitude. The purpose of the universe is accomplished even though the good man perish, for the sanctity in which he died was but the triumph of reason over emotion and of life on that sordid level.

This drama represents well the thought of the Enlightenment, dominated by the philosopher Leibniz, who shows that it is unsafe to trust sensuous knowledge for truth. The passions and emotions are not ultimately valid as sources of knowledge. The universal is the rational. All that perceptual knowledge can offer, all intuitions of pain, pleasure, and desire, are blurred accounts of truth—not clear and distinct cognition. Since perception and emotion are debased forms of knowledge they cannot be expected to guide men into right ways. Perhaps then we may say, the death of the hero on the stage is the renunciation of the blurred, for clear and universal, knowledge. It is such clear and universal knowledge as we usually identify with law, duty, with the sanction of truth. Thus in affirming the validity of reason there is reconciliation in the French Classic drama. Wisdom makes man superior to the complexities of existence by withdrawing him, in one sense, from them. But erroneous judgments of conduct, since they arise from passion, are mere conceits and irrational.⁶⁶

Would that speculation had let this solution alone! But there is a moment in the idealistic thought of the Nineteenth Century which has seized on this problem and worked it out to a point where there is little of rationality left in it. The relation of the personal to the ultimately rational has been set forth in certain idealistic systems with some logical success and cogency; though it must be confessed, the solution is ironical. For in demanding that man renounce all that is opposed to a factitious sphere of conduct, idealistic thought has done so only as a punishment for what Calderon called the sin of existence.⁶⁷

VI.

The Speculative Outcome.

The idea that greatness of mind can overcome the deep-seated dualisms of the universe reappears in the thought of the Nineteenth Century. What was a possible idea for the Seventeenth Century: that nature is a system obedient to the laws of reason, has received a twist in the Nineteenth Century by which the individual is submerged in that very system which his reason has constructed. Yet in that fact, that man's reason has constructed the system, aesthetic speculation finds the individual's salvation. The "real" individual, that is, must be the "universal."

The fact of tragedy may not be as alarming as what speculation may make of it. Some men fear what they are well able to bear, as Boëthius remarks; and the Stoics were right in attempting to rid man of vexations arising from superstition. Man's helplessness before destiny or chance is a peculiarly ancient idea, especially in tragedy; but it is a superstition which has by no means been laid in modern times. It may be more than a superstition; though in our attempts to rationalize it we commonly substitute for it equally irreducible ideas. For von Hartmann the ancient tragedy of fate was but the first step in that of unconquerable character.⁸⁸ It may have even more positive value for Schopenhauer:⁸⁹

"In tragedy the terrible side of life is presented to us, the wail of humanity, the reign of chance and error, the fall of the just, the triumph of the wicked; thus the aspect of the world that directly strives against our will is brought before our eyes."

But it is undoubtedly true that for many a "tragedy is always the same thing . . . making us realize the helplessness of mankind before destiny."⁹⁰ Perhaps from the ex-

ternal point of view there is always disaster and ruin,⁹¹ as a consequence of the conflict of good and evil and of poetic judgment on guilt.⁹²

The rejection of the theory of poetic justice as applying to all tragic situations has led to an attempt to define the rather hazy concept of tragic guilt and to rationalize it as well. The popular notion of tragic guilt is a misinterpretation of guilt as moral culpability. The confusion is not surprising in view of the rigorous ethical moments through which the people of Western Europe have passed. To throw the responsibility of the tragic situation on the individual implies the dominance of a rigid system external to man. It is a system to which he must conform, not because he can, but because he ought. Where there is a great gulf fixed between realms of nature and grace, it would seem impossible that there should be any moral achievement. Man should have a faculty by means of which he could, if he so chose, avoid at least those entanglements that beset the evil will. Then an inevitable accounting for an error in one's maxims of conduct is sure to follow the transgression. Satisfactory as such a result might be for the lover of poetic justice, it disregards some of the merits of the situation; and it does not satisfy the speculative elements of the problem. The dramatist as well as the philosopher may perceive the tragedy to lie in a man's very inability to conform to an external code of conduct. It may be that, after all, just as the individual is not responsible for the tragic situation, so the futility of a struggle with necessary and universal conditions is unreasonable just because man's purposes and knowledge are personal and subjective.

The extension of the idea of tragic guilt to include the metaphysical weakness of the personal has reference to the reality of the person and his relation to the universe. The new view of man and history suggests new problems peculiarly idealistic or evolutionary. The units or parts of any system are denied crass and discrete reality; they derive reality by their dependence on, and participation in, a universal. The permanence of a specific thing in a certain set of

relations is not a matter of maintaining a thing as just that thing; but rather a question of continuing the function which the unit or atom had temporarily assumed. The inner movement and life of the absolute is the outer movement and death of the parts."⁹ The burden of carrying on the work of the universe rests on the parts; hence the necessary expansion of the latter to meet new demands is supposed to be a usurpation by the parts of the function of the whole. When the particular becomes too much or too exclusively the individual, as the Hegelians say, its life as a specific thing is already of the past. And if the external conflict and ruin is the result of a struggle of right against right, that in itself is an evil;¹⁰ but an evil of an entirely different order.

Speculation in the Nineteenth Century has left the individual little to hope for. He still lives in a universe to be sure; and he is part and parcel of it. But his desire to be a unique individual is granted only with heavy penalties attached. The rationality of the universe as a whole implies the relative existence only, of each of the parts. The world is real as a whole; its parts are only phenomena. Man as an individual is no less a transgressor against the divinity of the world than he was formerly thought to be a sinner against God's law by Adam's fall. Man is indeed freed from the charge of sin by reason of an immanent rationality in the world; but then all finite desire is readily perverted. If a man's purpose pretends to be more than an idle wish, yet even that wish is a law legislating against the higher purposes of the absolute, and from that the guilt of conflict results. Precisely those things which make personality worth having: hope and aspiration, and the power to reorganize the world from within, are just the things man cannot have and yet live. If tragedy is a fact (and not merely an artistic vision), this is the explanation we are bound to give it on the basis of distinctly Nineteenth Century thought. It goes without saying that thinkers have not been content with merely this story. The attack on the old theory of tragic guilt as identical with moral guilt has as its object to rationalize those situations in which

no such moral guilt could be imputed to the characters; for much that is clear to the eye of art is hidden from the moralist.⁹⁵

The fact of tragedy aside, the spectacle of conflict is of fundamental value and significance. What we mean by tragic guilt is not moral reprehensibility, but any source of suffering where the "weight of the tragic fault is not commensurable with the moral transgression."⁹⁶ What results is simply the maintenance of the moral harmony of the universe.⁹⁷ Out of this suffering is supposed to arise the purest expression of personality. The hero must will his outer defeat as the highest expression of abstract spirit, though it need not be the best expression of action or success.⁹⁸ The philosophy of valuation attempts an interpretation of the psychological value to the spectator of the metaphysical guilt of the hero.⁹⁹

"Where the individual goes to destruction for the worth which he identifies with himself * * * the absolute personal worth has been realized even if the object for which the sacrifice has been made is from the personal point of view of instrumental judgment, not considered worth the sacrifice."

But this theory overlooks what the earlier speculation would by no means regard as a merely contingent alternative. The devotion of the hero to some object of implied worth may be an act of will; but it does not follow that the hero as shortsightedly wills his own destruction with freedom equal to that with which he first wills his desire or ideal. What is described as conflict, or conflict of opposing wills, has as a consequence the necessary surrender only to the stronger reason, to that which is more nearly universally true. "The voice of reason in the actors is dumb," but there is "a wise providence which may at the last lead to a completely contradictory, but satisfying, conclusion."¹⁰⁰

To Hamann, also, this conclusion is contradictory, but neither satisfactory nor just. He says:¹⁰¹

"We speak of the tragic when we experience in the destruction of a personal value, to which we have ascribed a right to exist, a contradiction to our ethical standard of what should be and a destiny unjustly prepared for us. A tragedy is the portrayal of an especially flagrant case."

Yet the conflict may be between right and right, and¹⁰²

"that which is humanly the weaker is, in the human sense, crushed and ground to powder. But in its very defeat it has found victory and the conqueror himself bows in utter abasement before the divine law which he has obstinately defied."

One may grant that the individual should learn to know his place and that he should not defy the divine will; but why should it be that in a rational world the absolute only is real, and all expressions of the absolute are unreal? Man can never understand a world in which the absolute will never be aught but a thing-in-itself, and phenomena never anything at all in themselves. Man desires little here below; and while he does not want it long, it must be real in the interim. Perhaps this is why Hegel and others are reported as dead by certain thinkers; but that the Hegelian interpretation should have lived on so long in many critical judgments is perhaps just the fact that we love the morbid: because the morbid is so very real and commonplace!

Thought leads in this direction to two farther steps beyond which it may not be possible to go. The metaphysical contingency of the individual and of all that is human leads to a necessary "overstepping of the due bounds of finiteness."¹⁰³ Human aspiration by overstepping the due bounds of finiteness disturbs the equilibrium

of the spiritual world. Secondly, even though there be no such disturbance due to false pretenders to worth and reason, there is a metaphysical diremption in the basis of the universe with which it would be hopeless for man to contend. The universe is so hopelessly irrational at bottom that human reason must accept it as final. Because the suffering of an innocent person is utterly monstrous, we must find something to take the place of the guilt which would make the fact intelligible to our habitual form of thought. It is impossible that anyone should be free from guilt,¹⁰⁴ for every one is guilty through the necessity of destiny,¹⁰⁵ and in the face of the infinitely spiritual every aspiration for finite greatness must disappear.¹⁰⁶ Guilt and finitude are at once identified, even though with some change of meaning. It is, to repeat a hackneyed platitude, both a misfortune and a mystery that we are human. We prove our personality by devotion to all that is partial and local; we believe in all the half-truths: for what else is there to believe? In our devotion to the finite we find tragedy; in renunciation, a destruction which is called victory and success. Christianity has taught self-sacrifice in an endeavor to gain more permanent values of life;¹⁰⁷ and the lesson has not been lost in theory. In a world where all is relative, our fault consists in mistaking the rationality of the finite, which is merely its relativity, for an ideal rationality never found in the specific thing.¹⁰⁸ Our guilt is that, since we can pay allegiance to but one motivating force at a time, we forget the legitimate claims of others.¹⁰⁹ We cannot of ourselves "play the part of Providence" as Lotze points out.¹¹⁰ By this he means that we are incapable of "laying hold of the coherent system of the world's course as a formulative and guiding principle."

The final step is to state the consequences of contradiction. Not only is the individual divided against itself,¹¹¹ in an attempt to serve two masters, one finite and one infinite; but, as with Hegel, the sides to the conflict have equal right.¹¹² At the same time, each in its claim to right must be a denial of the same right in the other. In dra-

matic action we watch this contradiction leading to such results that a resolution of the difficulty is precluded, and duplicity made necessary. The impossibility of reconciliation is made by Bahnsen the peculiar property of the "innermost core of reality" which is torn asunder and illogically divided.¹¹³

The challenge for a rationalized theory of tragedy has called forth two champions of especial interest, Hegel and Solger.¹¹⁴ Hegel says in the *Aesthetik* (freely translated) :¹¹⁵

"The principle of dramatic poesy, in which we have collision of purposes and characters, and in which the necessity for a solution of such a conflict is the central point, can only be the relation of the individual to his purposes and their content. * * * Just as the tragic purpose and character are necessarily determined, so the solution of the tragic difficulty likewise; and in this solution we have the eternal righteousness working through the individual and his purposes in such a way that the unity of the moral Substance is preserved by the destruction of the individual who disturbs its repose" (*i. e.*, by giving his allegiance to one interest only). "It is only the one-sided specialization of interest which is mortified in the tragic conclusion, because it has made itself prejudicial to this harmony; and which now in its tragic activity, if it cannot be resigned, exposes its whole totality to destruction if the hero persists in the prosecution of his one-sided interest."

Hegel was in a fair way of rationalizing tragedy forever by showing that tragedy is conflict and not suffering, for conflict we see and understand. But he goes on to point out that the conflict lies between abstractions of the moral sphere, each having equal right to exist: *e. g.*, institutions like the state and the family.¹¹⁶ Some of these abstractions are less abstract than others: some are more

nearly universal in the scope of their spiritual interests; and hence they may demand from the moral person a subjection that forces the resignation of all merely personal interests. The individual is the victim of a double paradox: he is never merely an individual and yet he can never be more than one; for he is a complex of finite and infinite factors and is subject to interests controlled now by one and again by the other. Consequently the individual is a member of many higher organizations; and the higher the institution the more does it demand a proportionate negation of his purely personal or subjective nature. The conflicts which arise from this paradoxical position presuppose a system of values which is not a matter of experience or personal interest; but it is a system of transvaluations imposed on the world by the operation of the "Idee." The course of the universe, if rational, is consciously present to itself only, working in accordance with universal laws sublimely unconscious of the mere person; and granting to him as his only right, what is to us, the totally incomprehensible favor of losing the actuality of his being.

Solger has some remarkable statements in his *Vorlesungen ueber Aesthetik*, where he points out that the tragic relation in beauty is a contradiction between temporal phenomena and reality.¹¹⁷ In tragedy, it is reality itself, under the form of beauty, that is sacrificed; so that¹¹⁸

"tragedy consists of an inner contradiction of human nature, wherein the highest, namely reason, is drawn into the sphere of appearance; * * * therefore, what is negated in tragedy is reason itself, and not merely the temporal appearance. Reason, which is the highest and most venerable in us, cannot exist without contradictions."

Solger's view of the universe presupposed by his *Aesthetik* assumes two metaphysical elements: the spiritual and the physical (which Solger sometimes calls respec-

tively Reason and Appearance). Neither of these aspects is present as such to human cognition; because everything that is a part of the intelligible universe is a combination of both factors. Knowledge is a combination of Form and Content, the universal and the particular. Knowledge and beauty, from one point of view, are identical. Reason is, in itself, the real and true; appearance is but the partially real and, in so far, untrue expression of reason. Everything intelligible, therefore, like a work of art contains an element of untruth; because on one side, reason cannot be completely drawn into the world of sense; and, on the other side, things of sense can never be fully idealized. Any apotheosis of knowledge to the dignity of dogmatic truth is as disastrous as is the conflict between personal and universal interests in the sphere of art. The result in both cases is to deny validity to these pretensions to Reason. When a partial truth is made to do duty for a universal (when a habit is given arbitrary value), the false evaluation is sure to bring with it a sense of its limitation to the world of phenomena. Since all things human are informed by a finite factor, knowledge and human endeavor are always mortified by the apostasy of reason and validity. If knowledge can be no more perfect than this, art will represent the inability of the universe to guarantee the successful accomplishment of our purposes. This is just what tragedy does: implying that there is an element in the universe beyond human apprehension. Our motives are invalidated because there is a truth beyond motive and purpose which is somehow inimical to the act of realization.¹¹⁹

I have been suggesting that the mystery of tragedy is a necessary fiction arising as a result of those systems of thought which are roughly characterized as idealistic; *i. e.*, those in which the universe is under the sway of an inscrutable element called reason. The metaphysical basis of the world is so-called because the world is apparently governed by a power whose acts are consistent on either one of two bases:

1. That wherein the world is regarded as having a moral constitution accounting for suffering and defeat as:

- a. violation of well-known moral regulations.
- b. inadvertently assuming moral value for our purposes and acts unwarranted by our knowledge.

2. On the other basis, Reason is a metaphysical reality, which

a. in one case denies the validity of judgments based on emotion or perception;

b. and in the other case, denies reality both to the individual and to anything which he could possibly identify with his well-being.

The tragic, then, is man's consciousness of his unbearable situation; and tragedy is its artistic representation. Having traced the idea to an impossible ending, where a man must deceive himself to live, or to die, there is another possible solution to the problem which must be considered before the present task is done. That other possible solution lies in the assertion sometimes heard, that comedy and tragedy are very close together in their essential nature, and that the outlook from the former is not so black as painted. In other words, we have to consider whether the fictitious element in tragedy is not reducible to a comedy element. Are the contradictions noted in the speculation about tragedy any more serious than the ambiguities of a pun, and may they be laughed away as easily?

VII.

The Irrational Element and the Comic Conflict.

Whatever similarities there may be between the speculative contradictions of tragedy and the perceptual contrasts of comedy go to show that there is still a fiction in tragedy different from that in comedy. The seriousness

of the conflict in comedy is a fiction; for if it were not, the solution of comedy could hardly be regarded as "satisfying." The similarities of tragedy and comedy are of no more weight than their differences; and the attempt to harmonize their divergent outlooks requires a shifting back and forth between two metaphysically different standpoints.

There is need for clearing away the confusing relations of the two types of dramatic art, and the misconceptions of the traditional material of the comic. That element of comedy by which it is related to the theory of knowledge, and which makes it the antithesis of tragedy as here defined, will be best grasped by excluding from consideration those critical estimates which rest on psychological grounds. It is also expedient to abstract from the traditional artistic idea that the persons of comedy are low-born and commonplace; or the more speculative idea that the persons of tragedy are individuals, and those of comedy types; or that tragedy is subjective, and comedy objective.¹²⁰

Taken in their entirety, it may be legitimately doubted whether tragedy and comedy are in all points antithetical; it may be possible to hold a theory of their essential identity. But as having a basis in the theory of knowledge, tragedy and comedy are the terms of an opposition consistently explained by showing that they are functions of fundamentally opposed views of the universe. The general nature of this opposition is a matter of translating what is true for one view of the universe into what would be true for the opposite view. What was before pointed out as the criticism of the merely innate, would be for comedy merely the unreality of serious problems. The tragedy which results from pretensions to ultimate worth is, from the point of view of an empirical world, merely a contrast. The higher powers of the universe, for idealism, are beyond knowledge and understanding and in their operation necessarily express themselves to us irrationally. To turn this view to account for comedy, we must

have a world wherein such supernaturalism is not a reality but a mere figment of the mind.

Most comedy lies in the field of conflicting wills; and the chances that result do so because individuals do not always act from necessity, but sometimes from choice. The solution results by finding that purposes are not contradictory; that one purpose is not superior to another by nature; that a set purpose may be easily renounced on finding that another serves the end of desire just as well.¹²¹ The comedy of humors, for example, is usually solved by the simple resolution of a difficulty which is usually the result of wills working without restraint except that of limitation to time and space. The conflict shows clearly that knowledge is adequate to solve the difficulty, except that such knowledge is not always forthcoming at the right time to prevent all misunderstanding; and, so far as the stage is concerned, depends on what would be, for tragedy, adventitious aid for its solution. This is the reason why the hero of comedy is so often possessed of all the lines of action and appears at the right time to solve all difficulties. The hero is the abstraction for the *deus*, but transformed in his nature, since he is no more than what it is possible for the normal human to be.

There are in general two points of view from which the concept of comedy is regarded. The first is that in which a theory of the comic or laughable predominates; and the other is that in which we have the moral law of the universe in the old *rôle* of self-justifier.¹²² In the conflict of wills we have room for various theories of the comic as a feeling of degradation, baffled expectation, or incongruity;¹²³ *i. e.*, in all of them there is a contrast with the norm which shall be greater than any other term. The theory that all drama is conflict is obliged so far as comedy is concerned, to tone down the conflict to something like mere contrast or to suppose that the conflict is after all unimportant—in fact, no real conflict at all.¹²⁴ It is as Muensterberg says: "In comedy the great will

is recognized as really a small one for which true opposition never existed."¹²⁶

With Schopenhauer the attempt to find a consistent theory of comedy leads one to expect that he will either contradict his view of the world as essentially tragic, or debase the function of comedy to that of a mistaken view. He says:¹²⁶

"If we have found the tendency and ultimate intention of tragedy to be a resignation, a denial of the will to live, we shall easily recognize in its opposite, comedy, the incitement to the continued assertion of the will. It is true that comedy, like every representation of life without exception, must bring before our eyes suffering and adversity; but it represents it to us as passing, resolving itself into joy, in general mingled with success, victory, and hopes, which in the end predominate. * * * Thus in the end it declares that life as a whole is thoroughly good, and especially it is always amusing; * * * and moreover if we once contemplate this burlesque side of life seriously * * * the reflective spectator may become convinced that the existence and action of such things (embarrassed, fearful, angry, envious) cannot of themselves be an end; that, on the contrary, they can only have attained to an existence through an error, and what so exhibits itself is something which had better not be."

On the other hand, the idealism of the Nineteenth Century has explained comedy as a function of the moral order of the universe. Michelet, perhaps, gives the clearest expression to this idea.¹²⁷ "In comedy the moral relations are so represented that in general the character is not destroyed, but maintains his power over them and is certain of victory from the beginning. * * * The collision is more a contrast contradicting sense, or of great effort directed toward an insignificant end" (than toward

a conflict of inimical forces). For Krause the moral good forces itself to expression when mere experience is found to be in harmony with reason.¹²⁸ In this he follows Solger, for whom comedy is the lawfulness of the commonplace course of events.¹²⁹

The recognition of those elements essential to the concepts of tragedy and comedy, whereby their divergent outlooks on the world are explained, may proceed by a symmetrical analysis of these concepts as problems of knowledge wherein both rational and irrational factors may be discovered. What is the contrast between the function of knowledge in a world of tragedy and in one of comedy?

In these epochs of thought when empirical attitudes prevail; when man asserts that he knows the outer world as it is with finality and absolute truth; or when, in his ethical system he declares that instinct, impulse, and sensuous interpretation of happiness lead to ultimate good; then his dramatic art will be expressed as comedy. For does not comedy represent a way out of the difficulties of conduct as much by the power of knowledge over events as by the belief in a victorious hero? The realization of personal aims in comedy depends on the fact that the outer world is the very basis and possibility of those aims. Were our purposes strictly of another world, they could not be forced to realization in this world except by inartistic machinery and metaphysical abstractions. Those eras in which there is for the theory of knowledge only one significant factor, the external, are preëminently eras of comedy. Such are, for example, the age of Aristophanes with his contemporary Democritus, and that attitude (generally the antithesis of Plato's) represented by the Sophists, atomists, and in ethics, the hedonists. Similar periods are, perhaps, the second century before Christ in Rome; the Seventeenth Century in France, and the later Seventeenth Century in England. It is not accidental that the philosophy of Hobbes described a world in which comedy is possible.

But those epochs which are skeptical of the world without; when only that is true which is beyond this world, will be given to tragic art in drama. In such epochs of thought the external world is constituted by subjective ideas having illusory value for the world of sense. Man's own personal knowledge is temporary and contingent. The state crushes the citizen; the gods are denizens of a world superior to that of the worshiper; the ultimate good is a demand incapable of realization here and now. Knowledge gives no superiority neither over the world nor over the forces external to man, except perhaps negatively. Because man cannot understand them, nor accommodate his ends to them, he is crushed by them. There is no way through a situation in which man sets his contingent knowledge in opposition to the eternal; unrighteous purposes and impulsive action alike go down before the larger conceptions of the universe. Such periods have been the Sophoclean, the Renaissance, and the Nineteenth Century. It must be remembered that no epoch is correctly described by one characteristic only; though it is permissible to abstract a dominant tendency for the sake of clarity. Thus, the natural antithesis of the comedy of Molière is the tragedy of Racine; and in the Nineteenth Century idealism has an antithesis in evolution and other theories of science.

By presenting the contrast between comedy and tragedy a little more in detail we can see the antithetical ideas of the two concepts more clearly. What the unknowable is in the sphere of philosophy, that tragedy is to the sphere of art. Tragedy is incomprehensible to common sense; but simple disaster is to it but the result of known causes. There is in the concept of tragedy an unknowable element which emerges only on the level of a reflection higher than that of common sense. To make of tragedy a conceit of knowledge (*i. e.*, the cause and purpose hypostatized as knowable) would imply the complete reversal of the common sense view; and would imply the evaluation of failure as of ultimate worth. To do so

requires a conversion of the individual in which he puts off all particularity and finiteness. The artist who writes a tragedy admits his inability to portray an orderly world in such terms as he has at his command. The aesthetic satisfactoriness of the view of the world presented in the play, as far as the audience is concerned, must lie in the close agreement of audience and author, and their mutual loss of conceit both with their world and with their power of understanding.

For tragedy, that is, our ideals have no reality and can have none; and it is even more than doubtful if they have ideal value. Knowledge defines but inadequately the relation between will and act, purpose and world-plan. Hence obstacles to human happiness prove insuperable. In brief, tragedy implies an insufficiency somewhere in human knowledge; but in comedy there is no question as to the adequacy of knowledge with respect to its object.

The function of knowledge in comedy is that of an orderly world. Dramatic art as comedy discovers to us an external world in which the knowledge we have of it is real. If the hero of comedy takes care that his knowledge is strictly certified, he may for that very reason maintain his superiority over external events. The circumvention of the stage villain is possible when his pretensions are exposed: not because the hero is good and the villain bad. The orderly knowledge which enables the hero to be such, is not always mere sense perception; but often a higher process of judgment which enables a man to conceive and execute a successful course of conduct. When our habits are conformable to such knowledge, that is, to first hand knowledge of an orderly world, we may avoid just those entanglements which arise from perceptual contradiction familiar to us in the ordinary comic devices. Our ideals in so far as they are specific acts, to be realized in time and space, are easy and certain of accomplishment.¹³⁰ A person may pursue even a mistaken course of conduct, at least one suggested by insufficient knowledge, without fear of ultimate disaster.

This concept is consistent without reference to the moral quality of the act, or to the ethical constitution of the person.

Satiric comedy directed against the idiosyncrasy of the more or less eminent person finds its solution in the increase of knowledge making the hero conformable to the acknowledged rational order of the world. If comedy reconciles by purging the mind of false knowledge, the chief difficulty that might overtake the hero would be the necessity of changing his body of knowledge. A change of habit is not accomplished without pain; but it is significant that art can appreciate and use a view of the world in which it is the obstacles to happiness that are irrational, and not happiness itself.

The world of comedy is one in which the spiritual world does not exist as an external reality, but only as an abstraction. The spiritual is to be explained in terms of the physical. Perceptual knowledge of such a world, because it is not duplicit, and because knowledge is a copy, is sufficient to carry a man through all ordinary entanglements of life. The validity of knowledge makes a man superior to all complexities; for in the last analysis they are seen to arise from the lack of knowledge, or from confusions in the abstract world of the spirit. Confusion which is after all an unreal abstraction could not maintain itself for a moment when confronted by the facts. The facts in tragedy, however, are the very things that aggravate the mystery. But true ratiocination from causes to effects and effects to causes is the basis of all comic solution in a profoundly real world.^{13 11}

The higher concrete processes of knowledge find a certain revelation in those situations in which the question of good and evil has given way to one of spiritual integration and disintegration, where the ultimately real is the ultimately moral. Here also comedy recognizes a rational element in the universe, though the hero may be sufficiently onesided to be brought into conflict with the fundamental unity of reality, even though this be merely

the consistency of time and space. In more serious cases, if comedy is to be anything more than warped and inartistic didacticism, the solution must preserve in the minds of the persons a right view of the world in so far as science is able to describe it. This is not a supernatural feat, but a solution based on the belief in the actuality of reason in the individual, as well as in the world at large. The interference of the supernatural in the affairs of men, as a *deus ex machina*, is not to be tolerated either from the point of view of art or that of philosophy. To use anything professedly supra-human in the solution of human entanglements is the bankruptcy of art for an empirical world. The artist admits by so doing that his vision is unclarified in the comprehension of the ordinary affairs of existence, and that his art is deficient by reason of his inability to reorganize his material to exhibit the world as after all trustworthy in its external aspects. In fact the *deus* is a metaphysical monster; since, if it must be used, it can be so only in a situation not amenable to human reason. That, for an intellectualist, is a deficient view of the world. Because the world is too irrational to submit to human power and knowledge the spectator is thrown back on irrational sources of apprehension. But true knowledge in a world of sense invalidates the distinction between reality and phenomena and makes knowledge itself the necessary and sufficient instrument of truth.

These references to the serious drama could be illustrated by Goethe's *Iphigeneia in Taurus*.¹⁸² The integrating element of the world is the fundamental metaphysical reality. Orestes thought the whole race of Tantalus to be branded with a curse; yet there is within humanity itself a regenerating impulse. "Out of thy passions, O man, hast thou made thy gods." When ends and purposes are erected out of purified passions, then man may hope for salvation. The recognition on the part of the author that such things be, as a completely integrated personality, is precisely that which makes his art a testimony to the

ultimate rationality of the universe. Orestes' task is to gain a clear understanding of the fundamental moral law; and then the drama is a question of the validity of conduct flowing from a true knowledge of the universe, rather than a question of the moral depravity or exaltation of the person. The crass, superstitious point of view had to give way to a refined view of the world: a thing impossible by an abstract moral regeneration, and possible only when the truth of the world fills the mind. That such knowledge was finally gained is evidence for the validity of the world as revealed by the ordinary powers of the mind. But, to be sure, this is not the result of simple observation; for it implies also man's ability to conceive ends in accordance with the laws of the world on which depends the possibility of righteousness attending human endeavor.

Because it is obvious that in the variety of meanings attached to the terms comedy and tragedy there will be some contradictory views that cannot be simultaneously held with consistency, it may be possible to sum up the rational and irrational elements in the two concepts.

Comedy is rational because it means essentially, that on the basis of a lawful world, situations are amenable to solution. The concept of the comic situation implies a world in which the individual is directly in touch with reality to such an extent, and in such a kind, that his knowledge is sufficient to analyze the conflict into cause and effect. Those complexities of an arbitrary nature, concerning which there is no foreknowing (*e. g.*, the actions of disintegrated mentalities), are easily disposed of by social or scientific discipline. At any rate, they are not imposed on us from without by an alien power. When comedy lies in the field of conflicting wills, acting not from strict necessity but sometimes from choice, the solution lies in finding that such purposes are not ultimately contradictory.¹³³

But there are in the concept of comedy certain abstractions for the irrational elements of tragedy.¹³⁴ The

comic situation is often, as a whole, irrational because dependent on a misunderstanding that can only be regarded as a perverse and conscious act of lawlessness. Such a thing is an anomaly in a rational world; and it can result only from an unreal world of fancy or whim; or from the equally unnecessary condition of ignorance. The limitation of facts to time and space relations; and the oftentimes capricious nature of fancy and emotion, serve as the entering wedge of irrationality into the world of empirical reality.¹³⁵ Mental confusion so inexplicable to common sense can arise from these causes; or conceivably also from those pretensions to knowledge which we call ignorance. The comic has also a vestige of the tragic solution. The change of habit so often necessary for the solution of comedy is not a little pathetic when pet conceits, identified with the ultimate values of life, go by the board. The discipline and suffering of the hero of tragedy has, as its correlate in comedy, the correction of false knowledge for consistent maxims of conduct.¹³⁶ If the world is real as we see it, and our knowledge thereof valid; then we can bend the world to our will and retain control over circumstances. If man should succeed in staving off death at will, that would be the most divine comedy the mind of man could conceive.

The first element of the irrationality of tragedy has already been suggested as the fact that reason, on the basis of certain views of the universe and in certain epochs of history, found itself unable to cope with the complexities of the universe. Tragic difficulties could not obviously be of the making of human wills. The partiality of knowledge when it pretended to absolute validity plunged man into conflicts with the so-called moral or universal forces of the universe. Because we fail to recognize this limitation to our knowledge, we are dismayed if our pet conceits, put to the test, prove ineffective to secure our good. If it is our fate that we can pay allegiance to half-truths only, yet man does not rise to enthusiasm for the renunciation of those half-truths de-

manded by a dynamic life. The partial failure of metaphysical and moral idealism to rationalize the notion of tragedy lies in the negation of the individual in all decisive situations. The very concept seems to imply that the individual has no interests which are not outlawed by the very fact that he has them. Art cannot rise above this contradiction, however skilfully it may be glozed by philosophy. But it is undeniable that from the point of view of the great idealistic systems, tragedy is only a revelation of the eternally true, which always wins no matter what specious reasons come up against it.

The adherent of the false is destroyed as the false and the evil should be. But this universality is an "otherness" to the individual. The total moral state of the universe is, doubtless, always much richer for tragedy so conceived. Yet to adapt an expression used in another connection:¹⁸⁷ "This ethical majesty is not all gain; the apotheosis of the spirit, by undeifying nature, impoverished man." The transcendent solution can be reconciled to human ends; though, it must be conceded, only by renouncing all that is opposed to the supreme law of the world; and this, the ironical destruction of the lesser power of man, too often implies the complete renunciation of our very humanity.¹⁸⁸

VIII.

General Summary.

The conception of tragedy may be regarded as an attempt to make man's position in the world intelligible; especially as an attempt to make rational this position on its more serious side and in its more somber aspects. The tragic situation when regarded as purely an artistic matter has three factors: the tragic guilt; the reversal of fortune; and the inevitable conditions. No one of these factors is satisfactory as an explanation when the responsibility for the tragedy is put upon it. The universe does

indeed contain unknowable factors; but if the universe is to be regarded as a completely rational whole, man should not suffer for his ignorance of those elements which are in their nature unknowable. The guiding thread for the discussion of these points was found in the possibility that there might be some relation between the unknowable element of the world and the factors of the tragic situation.

None of these factors was satisfactory, nor completely rational; for pertinent questions could be asked for which no answer could be found:

1. If tragic guilt was not necessarily moral or true guilt:

a. why, then, should the individual suffer for his acts in fruition of a laudable aspiration?

b. Why should such acts entail as results punishment and suffering out of all proportion to the quality of the act?

2. The reversal of fortune was hypostatized, by reason of the exaggeration of the emotional effects of that idea, and regarded as a divine malignity, or as an arbitrary supervision of the conditions of man's happiness and misery.

a. If there be such a thing as this Fortune, then the world is not subject to the laws of what we would like to think of as Justice.

b. The idea of reparation for the "too much" of anything by arbitrarily substituting the opposite extreme may be good metaphysics but rather cold comfort.

3. Finitude as guilt and as inevitably leading to the tragic negation of the individual:

a. seems to be merely a result of speculation on the relation of the finite to the infinite;

b. and makes intolerable the position of the individual in his relation to the universe.

The conceptions and definitions of tragedy seem to follow general types: *e. g.*, the tragedy of moral valor, of poetic justice; the conflict of ethical institutions; conflict in the nature of reality: between appearance and reality, between the finite and the universal. Testimony to any or all of these conceptions may be found in tragic art. But for the purpose of more minute exposition, in which a relation was to be pointed out between the tragic conception and the theory of knowledge characteristic of that conception, typical moments in the history of thought were chosen. The moments of thought chosen for illustration were:

1. The fall of a prince; *i. e.*, misfortune overtaking a king who is king by divine right.
2. The fall of a great mind; *i. e.*, the ruin of a great mind by reason of devastating passion.
3. The tragic conception of finitude as guilt.

The first of these was suggested by certain dramas of the English Renaissance. The Renaissance is regarded as a time when innate values are under criticism, as in the case of Marlowe's Faustus, who rejects the traditional bodies of knowledge. The idea that kingship is sacred is subjected to the same criticism. The prince is himself subject to the laws of equity, and to disregard them is to bring ruin upon himself. But the popular consciousness was more troubled by the sad end and reversal of fortune in such cases, than by any consideration of a true cause of the disaster. The whim of Fortune suggests an unknowable cause; and to overcome the whimsicalities of Fortune requires the subjection of desire to reason. The Complaint of Henry finds its answer in Greene's pamphlets, where he indicates that man may overcome the mischance of fortune by fortifying himself with philosophical precepts, a lesson which he had learned from antiquity. Or, as Descartes says in his Discourse on Method:¹⁸⁹

"My third maxim was to endeavor always to conquer myself rather than fortune, and change my

desires rather than the order of the world, and in general accustom myself to the persuasion that, except our own thoughts, there is absolutely nothing in our power."

The history of this idea of overcoming the outer world by a discipline of the self was traced from Aristotle to the Seventeenth Century. Contemplation as an activity of virtue, though it required external means wherein man might be subject to vicissitudes, was, yet, not materially affected by them. The Stoics and the Epicureans found the defeat of Fortune in the resignation of the will to the Reason of the world, and in the happiness which wisdom affords. Boëthius in his *Consolation of Philosophy* tried to show that no natural good lay in the power of Fortune either to give or to take away. The Seventeenth Century continued in a technical way to break down the superstition of chance or fortune by conceiving the world as a rational system subject to the laws of reason of which man's mathematical knowledge is a type. This period did not succeed completely in its task of rationalizing passion and emotion and sensuous knowledge, and it was to these that misfortune was ascribed. The typical tragedy of this period is that of the fall of a great mind. Spinoza's idea of man's bondage and freedom was seen to be embodied in and illustrated by Racine's *Phèdre*.

In the section called "The Speculative Outcome" the inevitable conditions leading to the catastrophe of a tragedy were shown to be a metaphysical demand. This demand, as interpreted by idealistic thinkers, was traced to the same source as the tragic guilt. The result of this speculation was to make the position of the individual intolerable; for everything to which he could ascribe a right to exist, to which he ought to pay allegiance, involved him in insoluble conflicts. This result was referred for its basis to the philosophy of Hegel and Solger.

Finally, the possibility of reducing the conflicts of

tragedy to the same basis as the conflicts of comedy was discussed in the last section. It was there pointed out that certain essential distinctions between the conceptions of tragedy and comedy must be reckoned with. This point was referred for explanation to the divergent theories of knowledge underlying the aesthetic values of the two kinds of drama.

NOTES.

1. The conceptions and definitions referred to are as follows:
 A. Poetic justice, as defended by Reich against Schopenhauer in Schopenhauer als Philos. d. Trag. 1888. B. The Aristotelian conception in the Poetics. On this whole matter see Lessing: Hamburg. Dram. St. 79. The works of Bernays; Bywater; and Butcher: Aristotle's Philosophy of Fine Art, p. 317, for the interpretation of "amartia"; and on this point see also P. van Braam in Class. Quart., Oct., 1912, p. 266. C. The Hegelian theory that tragedy is conflict due to onesidedness of interest in moral institutions. Hegel: Vorl. u. d. Aesthetik III: 526 ff. Michelet: System d. Philos. III, 443. See also the translation by Hastie under the title: Philosophy of Art, by Hegel and Michelet, Edinburgh, 1886. D. The theory of conflict between wills. Muensterberg: Eternal Values, p. 230 ff. Urban: Valuation. E. Tragedy as victory and freedom in suffering. Courtney: Tragedy. Ziegler: Das Gefühl, S. 140. F. The medieval conception of the fall of great men through the indiscriminate strokes of Fortune. Boethius: Consolation of Philosophy, Bk. I, met. 5, pr. 5, 6; Bk. II, pr. 1, 2, 3, 4, etc. Chaucer: Monk's Prologue. Puttenham: Arte of English Poesie (Arber), pp. 41, 48. G. Schopenhauer's necessary resignation of the will to live through recognition of the inner irrationality of the universe. World as Will and Idea III: 212 (Eng. trans.). Bahnsen: Das Tragische als Weltgesetz. Ibid. Zur Philos. d. Geschichte. Sully: Pessimism, p. 107. Eisler: Woerterbuch (1904) II: 510. Volkelt: System, etc., II: 294.

2. The question of valuation cannot yet be determined. What is meant is that a purpose more intimate and personal gives way to one more remote and general. Whether such a movement constitutes tragedy or comedy depends on other considerations.

3. For a full discussion of tragic guilt see Volkelt: System d. Aesthetik, sub voce.

4. Motives supplying tragic guilt: A. Conduct motivated by passion. Romeo and Juliet; Othello, and the "revenge" plays in general, *e. g.*, Kyd: The Spanish Tragedy. B. Too great regard for moral principles. Sophocles: Antigone; and the case of Hippolytus in the dramas by Euripides, Seneca, and Racine. C. Disregard for moral principles. Macbeth. Ford: 'Tis Pity She's a Whore. Webster: The White Devil, "radiant with evil." In Marlowe's Faustus there is a conscious disregard for the need of personal righteousness. Faustus sacrifices his integrity as conceived by Christianity for the sake of worldly ends. D. Predisposition to commit lawless acts. This was the infirmity of the House of Atreus and in fact of the

whole race of Tantalus. E. Error or frailty of judgment. The case of King Lear. F. Conspicuous aspiration. Shirley: The Cardinal. Chapman: Bussy D'Ambois. Ibsen: An Enemy of the People.

5. Extension of the meaning of tragic guilt. A. Allegiance to unworthy ends. The king in Marlowe's Edward II. B. Devotion to one interest exclusively. Michelet, l. c. so defines. Hebbel: Werke X: 13f. 35f. So also among others L. Ziegler, op. c. 45. Krause (see von Hartmann; Aesthetik I:439). Lotze: Outlines of Aesthetics 104. Vischer: Schoene u. d. Kunst 180. Schelling: Philos. d. Kunst 695.

6. The reversal of fortune interpreted as divine jealousy. Aeschylus in Agamemnon 750 ff. (Plumprtrie):

"There lives an old saw framed in ancient days,
In memories of men, that high estate
Full grown, brings forth its young nor childless dies;
But that from good success
Springs to the race a woe insatiable."

The translator adds a note: "The dominant creed of Greece at this time was, that the gods were envious of man's prosperity, and this alone, apart from moral evil, was enough to draw down their wrath, and bring a curse upon the prosperous house. So *e. g.*, Amasis tells Polycrates (Herod. iii 40) that the unseen divinity that rules the world is envious, that power and glory are inevitably the precursors of destruction." This idea was popularized in Western Europe by Boëthius. Aeschylus himself rejects the notion. Cf. Campbell in his edition of Eschylus, p. xvi. "The poet here diverges from the crude notion of Nemesis and Divine Envy contending that sin and not prosperity is the cause of ruin * * * Justice will triumph but not necessarily now." Fortune is the state of a man with respect to the world and its goods; but it may also be conceived as the cause of a change in that status. Hence "change of fortune" has a double reference. The result is the same whether the tragedy is due to the jealousy of the gods, Nemesis, to moral transgression, or to an arbitrary "Fortune."

7. On the inevitableness Herodotus remarks: "Xerxes works out his own destruction, but he is brought to this by the irresistible leadings of a divine power. 'It was to be so.' When the good counsel of Artabanus had all but prevailed, the dream was sent by God to bring it to nought. The Xerxes of Aeschylus falls under the censure of Darius for his impious recklessness in listening to evil counsellors who had hastened on the destruction, which had been prophesied indeed, but which might otherwise have been delayed." (Campbell: Aeschylus xv).

8. Lessing: Hamburgische Dramaturgie, St. 1 and 79.

9. Bahnsen describes the illogical contradictions of the world as a "real dialectic" process. "Nothing but the will rending itself in

eternal self-partition to endless torment." Cf. his *Das Tragische*, SS. 45, 65, 69, etc. Volkelt, op. c. II: 294. Sully: *Pessimism*, p. 107. Eisler: *Woerterbuch*, l. c.

10. The attempt to view the universe conceptually in all of its aspects allows us to speak of the unity of all philosophical inquiry in somewhat the same sense that we speak of the unity of science. By reason of its conceptual character, philosophy is supposed to be able to view the universe in a way impossible to the specific sciences. This does not deny to mathematics, for example, the conceptual character of a pure science; nor does it deny that science may have a legitimate task in constructing concepts of universal validity. But because philosophy is concerned with the significance of facts rather than with their accumulation and classification; because philosophy regards facts as having conceptual significance, it may affirm of them for that reason what is universally true, not merely what is statically, or temporally true. Within philosophy itself, however, there is a principle of differentiation; so that philosophy, though having a unity in the sense indicated, may be said to combine a number of departments or disciplines. All disciplines deal with very much the same presuppositions; and the principles of one department may be translated into the terms of another. Each may with some restatement or reinterpretation, utilize the concepts of another subsuming them under its own higher and dominating category.

11. Beauty is known to us through sensuous experience. I have no immediate experience of the "beauty" to be found in such a thing as a mathematical demonstration; nor do I attempt to define what such beauty would be. The perfection, harmony, and congruence of a demonstration, or a type in biology, might turn out to be beauty, and might not happen to be concrete. Still, I might concede so much without receding from the statement above concerning the beauty of art. I believe the beauty of art and the so-called beauty of nature are two different things. The question at issue in this discussion is, ultimately, whether the beauty of art is not identical with the measure of success or failure to secure a solution of speculative difficulties. In this respect mathematics is no whit better off than any other department of experience. Mathematics assures us of truth only when it can control its presuppositions and processes. Its speculative successes and failures challenge the same criticism which I urge against reflective thought about art.

12. Philosophy even in its form may be an expression of artistic ideals. Spinoza's *Ethica* may be taken as embodying the artistic ideals of his time; and Schelling's philosophical system that of the Romantic movement. Something of the same sort may be seen in Spencer: he indeed speaks of his love of system building. *Autobiography* II: 450.

13. Expressions indicating a principle accounting for the occurrence of tragedy:

"Misgoverned kings are cause of all this wreck."

—Marlowe: *Edward II* (*Everyman*), p. 270.

"But what is he whom rule and empery
Have not in life or death made miserable?"

—*Ibid.*, p. 274.

* * * "material instruction, elegant and sententious excitation to virtue, and defection from her contrary, being the soul, limbs, and limits of an authentical tragedy."—Chapman: *Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois*, Dedication (*Mermaid*), p. 226.

"The immortal powers

Protect a prince, though sold to impious acts,
And seem to slumber, till his roaring crimes
Awake their justice; but then, looking down,
And with impartial eyes, on his contempt
Of all religion, and moral goodness,
They, in their secret judgments, do determine
To leave him to his wickedness, which sinks him
When he is most secure."

—Massinger: *Roman Actor III*, i.

* * * "and on the stage

Decipher to the life what honors wait
On good and glorious actions, and the shame
That treads upon the heels of vice,"

Ibid. I, i.

"If to express a man sold to his lusts,
Wasting the treasure of his time and fortunes
In wanton dalliance, and to what sad end
A wretch that's so given over does arrive at;"

(If this be not the purpose of tragedy):

"Why are not all your golden principles,
Writ down by grave philosophers to instruct us
To choose fair virtue for our guide, not pleasure,
Condemn'd into the fire?"

Ibid. I, iii.

14. Chance or fate: *Oedipus Rex*. Passion: *Ajax*. Cf. *Rutilius Lupus* (ed. Ruhnken) II, 2. "The mother of inhumanity is avarice; its father passion. And when these are conjoined they bring forth hate, and from thence destruction also arises." Shelley has the idea in *Hellas* 729 ff.

"Revenge and wrong bring forth their kind;
The foul cubs like their parents are;
Their den is in the guilty mind,
And conscience feeds them with despair."

See also Bloomfield: Sept. con. Th. 210. Tollius: Longinus, sec. 43. Sophocles: Ajax (ed. Lobeck) 517. Aeschylus: Choephoroe, lines 306, 400, 613-651, 1014-1040.

"Curst be all malice! black are the fruits of spite,
And poison first their owners."

—Middleton: Trick to Catch the Old One, V, ii.

15. Fallible nature of intellect. Macbeth V, v. Bussy D'Ambois V, i. King John, II, ii last speech; III, i, the conflict between dogma and fact; IV, ii, where John says:

"Think you I bear the shears of destiny?
Have I commandment on the pulse of life?"

And Faulconbridge in IV, iii:

"I am amaz'd, methinks; and lose my way
Among the thorns and dangers of this world."

And cf. also act V passim.

16. The dubious character of sensuous knowledge: Heracleitus frag. 4 (Bywater) R. P. 34. "Eyes and ears are bad witnesses to men, if they have souls that understand not their language." For Socrates, Plato, Pyrrho, even for Democritus, sensuous knowledge was not wholly veracious.

17. The dubious character of conceptual knowledge was advocated by the Sophists; and later by those who undertook to restrict conceptual knowledge to its proper sphere: *e. g.*, Duns Scotus, Bacon, Locke, Hobbes, Hume, Kant. Conceptual knowledge has definite limitations.

18. The withdrawal from pleasure and pain was accomplished for the Stoics and Epicureans by the absence of emotion (*apatheia*); for the Skeptics by suspension of judgment (*epoke*) resulting in imperturbability (*ataraxia*).

19. The experience of tragedy is reduced to the values of conceptual thought in the theories of self-realization for which suffering and defeat are of the highest value for personality. This is the view of Cohn: Allg. Aesth. Courtney: Tragedy. Ziegler: Zur Meta. d. Trag.

20. Poetic justice was passed under criticism by Lipps and Volkelt. Cf. Tufts in Baldwin's Dictionary II: 709, col. 2, and Cohn: Allg. Aesth. 197 n.

21. Urban: Valuation, p. 279 defines tragical or heroic elevation as the limiting case of transgredient worth. 1. The point at which the individual having taken an attitude with which he identifies himself (hence a personal worth), sacrifices all "condition worths" for it—even life itself which is the presupposition of all condition worths. 2.

The point where "the individual sets himself in complete opposition to external worth judgments of society and goes to destruction for the worth which he identifies with himself * * * the absolute personal worth has been realized even though the object for which the sacrifice has been made is, from the impersonal point of view, not considered worth the sacrifice."

22. Bosanquet: Value and Destiny of the Individual, has shown, from the metaphysical point of view, that the position of the individual is not so intolerable.

23. Ruskin: Modern Painters IX, ch. ii, sec. 14, 15. His references are: A. The fate of Hippolytus; B. the misfortunes of the house of Atreus; C. Antigone.

24. Cf. Hartmann: Aesthetik I: 435 discussing Schelling. Besides the classification of tragedies of fate as 1. Objective; 2. subjective: the destiny of character; destiny may be interpreted as 1. The failure of an act to obtain moral sanction; 2. artistic retribution (Nemesis); 3. moral retribution (Justice); 4. infatuation of the gods with their own sense of justice (from the standpoint of the hero).

25. The irony in these concepts is the element that defies explanation. The unnatural combat in the story of Oedipus is perhaps the best example of tragic irony. There is a prophecy which has the force of destiny, that the son of Laius will prove his death. The son, Oedipus, is exposed; but being preserved, is just the circumstance needed to fulfill the prophecy in a casual manner.

26. In Oedipus at Coloneus the king is finally reconciled to the gods, i. e., the personal moral element in his misfortunes is overlooked.

27. The supreme powers are beneficent in the Eumenides and in the Philoctetes.

28. Cf. Campbell: Aeschylus, Sophocles and Shakespeare p. 60 f.

29. Aeschylus found an answer intelligible to himself, cf. notes 6 and 14 above.

30. Cf. the characters of Ajax or Medea.

31. "Yet it is one of Euripides' rooted convictions that an absolute devotion to some one principle * * * leads to havoc. The havoc may be on the whole the best thing: it is clear that Hippolytus "lived well," that his action was *kalon*; but it did as a matter of fact produce malediction and suicide and murder." Murray: Ancient Greek Lit. p. 270.

32. Ruskin: Mod. Paint. l. c.

33. Browning: Luria, Act V.

"A people is but the attempt of many
To rise to the completer life of one;
And those who live as models for the mass
Are singly of more value than they all."

34. Thorndike: Tragedy, p. 40.

35. "The propositions of Aristotle are fabrications." See Prantl: Sitz. d. koenig. Bayr. Acad. d. Wissen. phil.-philol. Klasse, Nov. 2, 1878, II, 2, p. 157. Taurellus also opposed Aristotelianism, maintaining that the world was temporal and atomic; and Tellesius likewise opposed the current philosophy in the interest of an original investigation of nature.

36. Marlowe: *Faustus* (Temple ed.) pp. 19, 24.

37. Similar ideas of Gregory the Great. The eight pillars of kingship: truth in things of the throne; patience in diplomacy; largesse; persuasiveness; correction of wrong; encouragement of right; light taxations; justice between rich and poor. See Carlyle: *Political Theories*, I: 225 n.

38. Dunning: *Ancient and Mediaeval Political Theories*, p. 187.

39. Abelard: *Ethica XIII*. Sin is not only a departure from the moral good, but it is also a violence done by the sinner to his own conscience.

40. Poet Lore, Winter Number 1910, Spring Number 1911, where I have tried to state the problem as a question of the One and the Many in the political sphere.

41. Sackville: *Complaint of Henry*, stanza 111: "Who reckless rules, might soon may hap to rue."

42. Numerous expressions throughout literature, e. g., Marlowe: *Edward II* (*Everyman's Lib.*) p. 293.

"Base Fortune, now I see, that in thy wheel
There is a point, to which when men aspire,
They tumble headlong down."

43. Fortesque: *De Laudibus Legum Angliae*, ch. 9. "Which sort of government (merely regal) the civil laws point out when they declare: 'Quod Principi placuit, leges habet vigorem.'"

44. *Edward II*, p. 277.

"But what are kings, when regiment is gone,
But perfect shadows in a sunshine day?"

Ibid. p. 274 see note 13 above and cf. the much later expression from Sothorne: *Loyal Brother* (1682).

"What is't to be a prince?
To have a keener sense of our misfortunes."

45. Schelling: *Elizabethan Drama* (2 ed.) I: 268.

46. Daniel: *Works* (ed. Grosart) III: 106 Cf. also his drama *Philotas*, 431 f.

"And this affliction our compassion draws
Which still looks on men's fortunes, not the cause."

But cf. Johnson: *Sejanus V*, x, 349 (referring to Juvenal, Sat. X).

47. Shakespeare: *King John III*: iv, 121.

48. Sackville: *Complaint of Henry* stanza 36 and *passim*.

49. Robert Greene: *Works* (Huth) III: 129. Fortune was "such a cause (according to Epicurus), as agreed neither to persons, times,

nor manners. * * * All future events subject to causal inconstancy, because they hang in suspense, and may fall out contrary to deliberation, may be comprehended under the word Fortune." Other expressions showing how to overcome Fortune look backward for their origin and forward to their fulfilment; viz.: "All Fortune's goods without knowledge how to use them are prejudicial; and the goods of the mind only, firm and perpetual." Ibid. III: 139. "Being assured, therefore, that there is such uncertainty in all human things, let us * * * apply our wills to all events whose causes are altogether incomprehensible in respect of our understandings, and quite out of our power * * *. That man which dare stand so with Fortune in defiance trusteth not in exterior contents, but stayeth himself upon philosophical precepts." Ibid. III: 138. "Canst thou condemn Fortune, which hast warred against nature and Fortune? No, no; in suffering reason to yield unto appetite, wisdom unto will, and wit unto affection, thou hast procured thine own death and thy soldiers' destruction." Ibid. III: 219.

50. Ironical, because fate operates under color of justice; but its acts, from the human point of view, are inconsistent. Fate feigns good-will, ultimate good to man; but as it can be judged only by its results is necessarily thought of as actually malicious.

51. P. van Braam, *Class Quart.* Oct. 1912, p. 266. Cf. Butcher: *Aristotle's Phil. of Fine Art*, p. 317.

52. "He (Aristotle) finds that the problem of tragedy does not lie so much within the man himself as in his relation to the world: not in the complications and contradictions of his own being, but in the conflict with the world." Eucken: *Problem of Human Life*, p. 68.

53. Aristotle: *Nic. Eth.* 1100a. "Why is it not absurd to suppose that, when a man is happy, the fact will not be true of him?" (It will not be true of him) "Because we do not wish to call the living happy in view of the vicissitudes to which they are liable; and because we have found a conception of happiness as something which is permanent and unchangeable; and because the same persons are liable to many changes of fortune. It is evident that if we consider only the changes of fortune, we shall often call the same person happy at one time and miserable at another, representing the happy man as a chameleon. To take cognizance of the changes of fortune cannot be right at all. It is not on these that good and evil depend; they are inseparable accidents of human life as we have said. But it is man's activities in accordance with virtue that constitute his happiness, and the opposite activities that constitute his misery."

54. Idem. 1178a. "It is only in a secondary sense that the life which accords with non-speculative virtue can be said to be happy; for the virtues of such activity are human: they have no divine element in them * * *. But the happiness which consists in the exercise of the reason and that of non-speculative virtue are entirely disparate."

55. Idem. 1104a. "For the particular case in the performance of virtuous activities does not fall under the rule by any art or law," for in this respect (1106b.) "virtue, like nature herself, is more accurate and better than any art."

56. Aristotle: *Meta. E.* recognizes the impossibility of denying that the accidental exists and the impossibility of a science of the accidental, i. e., of rationalizing it.

57. I use the word "external" quite innocently and do not deny that man is also subject internally to fate. cf. Goodell in *Yale Rev.* April, 1913.

58. The recognition of necessity need not be construed as despair or skepticism. Recognition of the lawfulness of the world is what makes it rational; and this is what gives us the right to hope that the world may be reconciled to man's will.

59. Murray: *Hibbert Journal* IX: 19.

60. Pliny: *Natural History* II, 5, (ed. Miller 1766) saw this point quite clearly: "Throughout the whole world at every place and time, the name of Fortune alone is spoken and her name invoked. She is the one defendant, the one culprit, the one thought in men's minds, the one object of praise, the one cause. * * * We are so much at the mercy of Fortune that Fortune is our God."

61. Seneca: *Epistles*, 65, 2. Eucken, op. c. p. 68. Numerous variations on the same theme are given by Ueberweg: *History of Philosophy* I, sec. 55.

62. Lucretius II: 216. Cicero: *De Fin.* I, 6. *De Nat. Deor.* I, 25.

63. Diogenes Laertius X, 76.

64. "Fortune but slightly crosses the wise man's path; his greatest and highest interests are directed by reason throughout the course of life." Hicks: *Stoic and Epicurean*, p. 187, maxim XVI. (trans. from Eusener: *Epicurea*).

65. Hicks, p. 186, frag. XI, XII. "If we had never been molested by alarms at celestial and atmospheric phenomena, nor by the misgiving that death somehow affects us, nor by neglect of the proper limits of pain and desires, we should have no need to study natural science." "It would be impossible to banish fears on matters of the highest importance if a man did not know the nature of the whole universe but lived in dread of what legends tell us."

66. Diog. Laert. X, passim. Lucretius III: 59-93. Cicero: *De Fin.* I, 13, 14. *Tusc. Disp.* I, xl, xlii, xlv.

67. Hegesias, the Cyrenaic, despaired of rising above change by thought alone: "But mere reflection on our general condition is not sufficient to elevate us above the changes of Fortune, since our general condition is not under our control."

68. Diog. Laert. IX. Sextus Empiricus: *Ad Math.* XI.

69. Boethius *Consolation of Philosophy*. Book III is an examination of this problem.

70. Augustine: *De Lib. Arbit.* II, 19. *De Civ. Dei.* XI, XII, *passim*.

71. Anselm: *Proslogium*, I.

72. Augustine, l. c.

73. Boethius, Bk. II, pr. 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8; Bk III, pr. 5. Cf. Sothorne: *Works* (1721) I: 38.

"Greatness (the earnest of malicious fate
For future woe) was never meant a good."

74. Chaucer: *Monk's Prologue*. This idea dominates a class of literature, e. g., Boccaccio: *De casibus virorum illustrium*; Lydgate's translation as the *Falls of Princes*; and its so-called continuation in the *Mirroure for Magistrates*.

75. Puttenham: *Arte of English Poesie*, 1589, Pt. I, ch. xi. Sidney: *Apology for Poetry* (Arber) p. 45. Moulton: *Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist*, p. 187.

76. Eucken: *Problem of Human Life* (Eng. trans.), p. 136. Schopenhauer: *World as Will* (Eng. trans.) III: 218.

77. Popular superstition, e. g., witchcraft, I have not dealt with as belonging specifically to this age. The age believed in witchcraft to the extent that it was irrational and should be stamped out. But every age has such extraordinary popular delusions. Here it is the irrationality of emotion that concerns me.

78. Eucken, op. c. 346. Cf. Dryden: *Song for St. Cecilia's Day*

"From Harmony, from heavenly harmony
This universal frame began
When nature underneath a heap
Of jarring atoms lay."

79. As in the dramas of Ford.

80. Descartes: *Letter to Princess Elizabeth*. *Oeuvres*, IX: 210.

81. Geulincx, quoted by Land in *Mind*, XVI: 235.

82. Spinoza: *Ethica*, Bk. III, prop. xxiv. Bk. IV, preface.

83. Descartes: *Letter to Catherine of Sweden*, *Oeuvres* X: 59.

84. It is perhaps a commonplace of criticism that in this period reason and morality are coming to be the standard of literary judgment. (Ristine: *English Tragi-Comedy*, p. 188). But reason in this case is so often equivalent to poetic justice that a counterblast will be tolerated. Addison: *Spectator* 40: "But I am sure it (poetic justice) has no foundation in Nature, in Reason, or in the Practice of the Ancients." Cf. *Spectator* 548. Goldsmith: *Art of Poetry*, 1761, II: 170: "It is a dispute indeed among critics whether virtue should always be rewarded and vice punished in the catastrophe of a tragedy; but the reasons on the negative side seem the strongest."

85. But cf. Lessing: "If the poet chooses a martyr, let him give to his actions the purest motives and unalterable necessity of taking

the step that places him in danger." Lessing would agree that the sight of the innocent suffering would displace the softer emotions by a sense of outraged justice. Ham. Dram. (Bohn) p. 435. Cf. Butcher, op. c. 309.

86. Wetz: Shakespeare v. Standpunkt d. vergl. Litt. Pt. I, 1890 (Reviewed in Mind, XVI: 296). Wetz points out that Shakespeare's characters act from emotion and affection but never from pure reason. Corneille and Racine cause their characters to act from reasoned principles but in many cases they strive against passions which they cannot resist. In this respect, Shakespeare is nearer to the position of Hume and the later position of Comte and Schopenhauer; while Corneille is nearer to that of Descartes: his characters are Spinozistic casuists.

87. Calderon: Life a Dream.

"For the greatest crime of man
Is that he was born."

88. von Hartmann, op. c. I: 435.

89. Schopenhauer, op. c. III: 212.

90. Chapman in Hibbert Journal VIII: 865.

91. Courtney: Tragedy, p. 75.

92. Campbell: Aeschylus, Sophocles etc. p. 51 f.

93. Cf. Bradley: Appearance and Reality, ch. xxvi.

94. Campbell, l. c.

95. Cohn: Allg. Aesth. 179 n. Lipps: Streit u. d. Tragoedie and Volkelt: System, for the idea of Guilt.

96. Lessing, op. c. St. 79. Schiller: Briefe II: 226. Krause discussed in von Hartmann I: 439. Ziegler: Das Gefühl 2 ed. 138, 140. Cohn, op. c. 199.

97. Muensterberg: Eternal Values, p. 234 f. Cohn l. c. reminiscent of heroic tragedy: "The tragic is the sublimity of suffering and sacrifice, or the suffering of a worthy person, whereby his greatness in sorrow is proved."

98. Gordon: Aesthetics 278 f. Puffer: Psych. of Beauty. Muensterberg l. c.

99. Urban. l. c.

100. Schelling: Werke, I, x: 118.

101. Hamann in Zeit. f. Phil. u. philos. Kritik, Bd. 117, S. 231.

102. Vaughan: Types of Tragic Drama, p. 15.

103. "Overstepping the due bounds of finiteness" may mean that the spirit in its ideals is capricious and that we fail just because ideals can be nothing more than ideals.

104. Cohn: Allg. Aesth. S. 198.

105. Schelling: Philos. d. Kunst S. 695.

106. Vischer l. c.

107. Eucken op. c. pp. 146, 182.

108. Solger: Vorlesungen ueber Aesthetik, S. 309 f. "The arbitrariness and contingency of the individual fall into conflict with the laws of universal necessity, by which the particular is lost; but only in so far as everything completely finite and temporal is; while the eternal and essential, ever the same with itself throughout perpetual contradiction, is energized and glorified."

109. Michelet, op. c. III: 443.

110. Lotze: Outlines of Aesthetics, p. 104.

111. Bradley in Hibbert Journal II: 667.

112. Hegel: Vorl. ueber die Aesthetik, III: 529, 480.

113. Bahnsen's general theory in Widerstreit im Wesen and in Das Tragische als Weltgesetz.

114. Solger in general follows Schelling on this point; Zeising and Krause express similar views.

115. Hegel: op. c. III: 526, 530f.

116. Ibid. III: 550f. Phenomenology of Spirit (Eng. trans.) II: 746 ff.

117. Solger, op. c. SS. 94f, 309f. Michelet: Gesch. der letzten Systeme, II: 560-598. Bosanquet: History of Aesthetic p. 395.

118. Solger's dialectic is so devious that I have tried to state his position in my own way.

119. Bahnsen: Zur Philos. d. Geschichte is directed against the rehabilitation of the Hegelian factor of Reason in the universe. See the notes on Bahnsen above.

120. Kallen in Journal of Phil. Psych, and Sci. Meth. vol. XI, no. 11. Comedy "deals not with individuals but with types: it is external and observational, not internal and imaginative. Only averages are its care and the inductive sciences its kin, in that in method and object its 'observation is always external and the result always general.'" The significance of this remark I take to be that comedy is possible only in a world in which the inductive method of science gives true results.

121. Muensterberg op. c. 236. In comedy the "will at first poses as great, but as soon as it has to confine itself under the pressure of the counter will, is just as well satisfied with the smallest bit of fulfilment."

122. Meredith insists on a polished and complex society for the *milieu* of comedy; the function of which is the maintenance of custom and the suppression of vice and follies. This reminds us of Ben Jonson: the comedy of satire is evidently the only kind here referred to. So for Hegel the world of comedy is a democracy.

123. Adams: Aesthetic Experience, p. 104.

124. Puffer, o. c. Gordon, o. c.

125. Muensterberg, l. c.

126. Schopenhauer, o. c. III: 218 ff.

127. Michelet: System etc. III: 443.

128. Krause: Vorl. u. Aesth. sec. 72.

129. Solger, o. c. 317 ff.

130. It is with the consistency of the concept that I am here concerned and not with the fact that causes sometimes run counter to the best laid plans. Even in comic drama there is much gambling on the unknowable, i. e., chance. To be forearmed with knowledge reduces chance to the mere memory that we experienced some subjective uncertainty.

131. I need only to refer to those stock situations in which a significant name, a ring, etc., shows that perceptual knowledge of a world which is not duplicit, of which knowledge is a copy, is sufficient to solve many mysterious complexities, at least those which might arise from ignorance of the testimony of the senses.

132. Cf. Dowden's introduction to this play in the Temple series.

133. In the English comedy of the Orange period, for example, there is usually a simple resolution of the difficulty which was due to the casualty of human wills working without restraint. The conflict shows clearly to the spectator that knowledge is adequate to solve the difficulties, except that such knowledge is not always forthcoming at the right time to prevent some misunderstanding, and not always without some reorganization of the plan of action. This is not always possible for the actor within the limits of the time and space relations which he must overcome. Where ordinary understanding is able to effect this reorganization, it is evident that the employment of adventitious aids in solving the difficulty is only symbolic. The limitation of time and space and artistic effect sometimes make this use of adventitious aid desirable or necessary. This is the reason why the comic hero so often holds all the lines of action in his grasp and can appear on the stage at just the right time.

134. E. g., the fatality of character when it is exposed on a small scale. Chapman in Hibbert Journal VIII: 865.

135. A comedy of an utterly capricious world is to me a contradiction in terms: such a thing cannot even be conceived. It is true that a comedy in which chance largely figures represents a world seemingly capricious. But this kind of caprice to give us comedy by definition must really be not caprice at all: but merely the shock of orderly knowledge in process of discovery. One might say that the comedies of Ben Jonson are built up of this orderly, through seemingly capricious, experience. Yet it is evident that the Jonsonian type of comedy reveals nothing in its solution that blasts our rational faculties or makes it impossible for us to maintain our equilibrium in the world. It is in the utterly capricious world of the hypothesis that an identity would exist between tragedy and comedy. It is significant therefore that aesthetic speculation, no matter what its theoretical presuppositions, makes a radical differentiation in its dramatic concepts.

136. Remembering Schleiermacher's contention concerning Socrates that the construction of complete systems of thought is made possible by the idea of knowledge.

137. Fairbairn: *Place of Christ in Modern Theology*, p. 196 concerning Lessing.

138. Cf. the citations from Michelet, Schopenhauer, and Calderon.

139. Descartes: *Discourse on Method* (Open Court ed.) p. 27.

